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Differences papered over at the Nato summit

Frankfurter Allgemeine

The Nato summit in Brussels was not just a stopover, as it were, on President Reagan's flight to Moscow. It also marked a caesura: probably Nato's last meeting with the man with whom it carried out, then countermanded, missile modernisation.

Yet it would be wrong to imagine that the one decision merely cancelled out the other.

From a number of strategic viewpoints the status quo may have been restored by the elimination of medium-range missiles, but politically this cannot be said to have been the case.

There is a substantial difference between the internal condition of Nato prior to the missile modernisation debate and its condition today, and it is a difference that has political significance.

The course and outcome of the Brussels summit reflect this change. Nato has remained determined to demonstrate unity and cohesion, but the wish and the reality are poles apart.

This was shown by the preparations for the summit and, in particular, by work on the final communiqué. At the end of the conference it was surely so clear as to be patently apparent to a wider public.

The attempt to maintain the appearance of cohesion came to grief on the interpretation of a single phrase.

The dispute over terminology stands for a clash over the political course Nato is to take after the double zero solution. Must it continue to give priority to disarmament talks or must it concentrate on consolidating its defence capability at a lower level?

Must it endorse modernisation of the remaining US nuclear weapons in Europe, as advocated by Britain, France and the United States in negotiations on the wording of the communiqué?

Or ought it to prefer the most non-committal statement possible, as advocated by the Germans, who wanted the communiqué to state that the North Atlantic pact's weapons must remain effective? That, then, was the choice.

In the end the other members of Nato dispensed with the term "modernise" and the Germans with the vague epithet "effective."

"At the latest level" was the compromise formula agreed, relativised at Bonn's insistence by the words "wherever necessary."

In the translation issued by the German embassy to Nato this passage was weakened. Instead of "the latest level" it said *der gebotene Stand* ("the appropriate level").

But Britain's Mrs Thatcher and US Secretary of State Shultz publicly confirmed what is, in any case, self-evident: that to "maintain at the latest level" and "to modernise" are, in this context, identical concepts — which Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher disputed.

These proceedings are noteworthy not only because they testify to Nato's central problem, the order of importance of its future priorities, but also because they are symptomatic in another respect.

Failing agreement on the matter in hand, which proved impossible, attempts were undertaken to agree on a formula that could be accepted by all because each could interpret it as he saw fit.

Joint action, however, requires agreement on the matter in hand, and after the summit Nato remains undecided.

It is undecided on both the modernisation of the remaining nuclear weapons in Europe and whether negotiations on a reduction in the number of short-range nuclear weapons ought only to be held once the proposed agreement on conventional disarmament in Europe and an agreement banning the worldwide manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons have been reached.

That would amount to postponing the talks until a juncture that is not even vaguely foreseeable.

Or, alternatively, might not talks be held in parallel on conventional and further nuclear disarmament in Europe?

While Bonn advocates parallel negotiations, only slightly staggered, Mrs Thatcher insisted in Brussels on holding first one set of talks, then the other.

President Mitterrand and Premier Chirac of France and Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher of Germany at the Nato summit (Photo: dpa)

Here too the communique forgoes clarity for the sake of apparent consensus, stating that negotiations on both issues must be held in correlation.

These examples make it clear what substantial changes Nato has undergone since Mr Reagan assumed office in 1981.

The matter in hand was then to deploy medium-range missiles, the weapon systems crucial for maintaining the Atlantic community of risk and its deterrent capability in Europe.

Their elimination has now been agreed, but views differ on when and how they are to be replaced or, indeed, whether their function is to be replaced. That triggers doubts whether Nato is able or willing to credibly maintain its deterrent strategy.

As long as Moscow merely went ahead with the Soviet arms build-up and said no to each and every Nato proposal there was nothing unduly dangerous about the variety of viewpoints held within the Western alliance.

A man such as Mr Gorbachov, however, is well able to make use of the opportunity this presents him with. True, Nato stands united. But as soon as it is required to move members are seen to be disagreed on which direction it is to take.

There is unlikely to be any change in this state of affairs, so what is the Soviet leader's next step likely to be?

The differences that at present separate the Federal Republic of Germany from its three major allies are a welcome opportunity for the Soviet Union, and the Bonn government could well find its own arguments prove dangerous.

On what basis is it to argue that the axiom "preserve the peace with fewer and fewer weapons," which stood it in good stead for two zero solutions, cannot hold good for a third?

Karl Feldmeyer

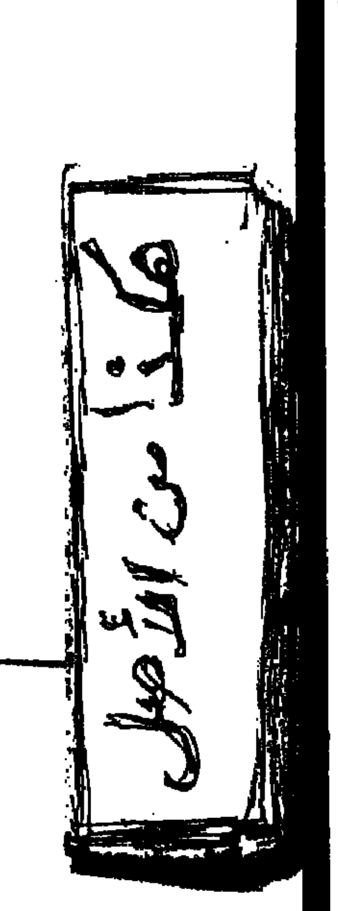
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 7 March 1988)

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Weizsäcker in Africa

Nigerian head of state General Ibrahim Babangida (left) welcoming German Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker to Lagos (Photo AP)



■ EASTERN EUROPE

Local leaders' low glasnost grades lead to national unrest in the Soviet Union

NÜRNBERGER Nachrichten

Outbreaks of national unrest in the Soviet Union, a multinational state, are more than a warning sign that Soviet nationalities policy can no longer be pursued with customary nonchalance and self-satisfaction.

Yuri Andropov clearly said so in 1983 and the point has gained general acceptance under Mikhail Gorbachov — but only in Moscow.

That is why the slightest manifestation of national dissatisfaction anywhere in the Soviet Union testifies to the maturity or otherwise of provincial politicians either affected or to blame.

Detailed investigation of individual instances shows nationalism to be insufficient as a common denominator of the different incidents.

Every nook and cranny of the Soviet Union, with its many and varied cultural and religious traditions, ethnic contrasts and socio-economic distinctions calls for separate and distinct analysis.

Street rallies in the capitals of the three Baltic states are a far cry from the December 1986 riots in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan.

The problems faced by the Crimean Tartars are by no means the same as those of the Armenians in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Soviet Azerbaijan.

All they have in common is that the people who took part in them do not share the fears that discouraged their predecessors.

An initial conclusion to be reached from the latest incidents is that local leaders in Baku and Erevan have proved a resounding failure where glasnost is concerned.

That cannot be said of their counterparts in the three Baltic states, who are gradually beginning to grow accustomed to the idea of a public discussion of their problems, although they still have much to learn about how to deal with their mostly not very significant groups of Opposition activists.

One characteristic of the unrest in Stepanakert and Erevan was that the Armenian and Azerbaijanian Press had nothing to say about it for days.

That made it difficult for the national media in Moscow, with the exception of *Izvestia*, to deal with the issue on their own. Even *Pravda* made do for two days with dry-as-dust *Tass* reports.

This continues to be the crucial weak link in Soviet Press policy. As long as the information monopoly is not ended once and for all even the communicative Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr Gerassimov, will at times be able to do no more than shrug his shoulders.

Greater flexibility has been shown by leaders of the three Baltic republics, where genuine national friction can most readily be said to have occurred.

They have lately begun to discuss in public the many spots marked white (or occasional darker chapters) in the chequered history of relations between their countries and Russia.

They have tolerated, or even encouraged, the presence of foreign observers at problematic historic anniversaries.

Greatly though these observers' views may have differed, they were all agreed that there is no mass movement in the three Baltic republics for independence from the Soviet Union.

Many reports about the size and extent of protest marches and rallies in the Baltic states are figments of the imagination of distant foreign sources.

Research into the causes of nonetheless unabated and tangible national clashes, with disputes self-evident even to whistle-stop visitors, must sooner or later lead to the decision to regulate the influx of alien, especially Russian, immigrants.

The sense of being culturally overwhelmed is what most upsets the small populations of the Baltic republics, especially in view of their low birth rates.

So although the Soviet leaders in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are well aware of the situation and much more adept at perestroika than their counterparts elsewhere in the Soviet Union, they still find it hard to part company with traditional bureaucratic responses.

They are afraid of making mistakes and being brought to task for them and deeply mistrustful of uncontrolled and spontaneous initiative, with the result that they still tend to favour the belt-and-braces approach.

Even so, the Baltic leaders seem to be heading the right direction, which is more than can be said for their counterparts in Baku and Erevan, who would soonest make believe there were no problems whatever even when the noise of rioting in the streets can no longer go unnoticed.

The December 1986 Alma-Ata riots shocked and upset the entire Soviet Union, but the Caucasian republics seem to have drawn no inferences as regards their own policies.

In Kazakhstan fundamental problems have by no means been resolved and there is no guarantee of lasting peace and quiet, but the new Party leader, a Russian national by the name of Kolbin, has at least scaled down tension in a relatively short time by pursuing an energetic policy of perestroika.

His appointment to replace the corrupt Brezhnev crony Dinmuhammed Kunayev, a Kazakh national, as Party leader in Alma-Ata was what triggered the riots in the first place.

But local mistakes are not invariably to blame. Soviet nationality policy has rested on its laurels since the Second World War, which welded the Soviet Union into a domestic entity, merely proclaiming in prayer-wheel fashion that all was well.

In addition to urgently needed political and social measures, history must be thoroughly rewritten in the Soviet Union's deep south, just as it must in the Baltic, to ensure the elimination of constant causes of national responses based on defiance and refusal.

A reorganisation of political institutions designed to ensure even for small nations a genuine say in the running of their affairs, as opposed to mere formal autonomy, has at least been tabled in principle.

How it is put into practice will, in the final analysis, be decisive *for peace* (or unrest) in the multinational Soviet Union.

Uwe Engelbrecht

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 26 September 1988)

Six Balkan Foreign Ministers meet — and like the idea

Foreign Ministers of the six Balkan states (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia) have expressed satisfaction with the outcome of their Belgrade gathering.

They decided to hold further meetings at Ministerial and expert level. The proposals submitted by Greece were accepted — in a slightly diluted version.

Balkan Foreign Ministry representatives are to meet again later this year. The Belgrade communiqué refers to future "periodic consultations" by the Foreign Ministers without specifying deadlines.

At Turkey's suggestion the Balkan states' Economic Affairs Ministers are to meet this year in Ankara and Transport Ministers to meet in Sofia.

A further meeting to be held this year in Rumania will consider industrial cooperation and technology transfer. Further talks are to be held on the Greek proposal to set up an economic cooperation institute in Athens.

The Albanians put a damper on the wave of institutionalisation that initially threatened to get out of hand. They advocated first putting into effect what had already been accomplished.

Foreign Minister Malile of Albania was given an attentive hearing. His quiet manner and realistic attitude were impressive.

Those they impressed included observers from Kosovo, the predominantly Albanian-speaking province of Serbia. Albania, it was said, has gone a long way toward surmounting its self-imposed isolation.

Foreign Minister Totu of Rumania seemed in contrast to have little more in mind than arranging a summit meeting of heads of state and government that would enable President Ceausescu to star as the host.

The other Balkan states were not wildly enthusiastic, agreeing to consider the proposal "once the conditions were right." Even in the Balkans Rumania seemed gradually to have manoeuvred itself out of range of real relations.

Bucharest was the prime target of requests for an improvement in humanitarian cooperation. It has border disputes with Hungary (on its Hungarian minority), with Yugoslavia (on cross-border traffic) and with Bulgaria (where Ruse is almost daily covered in a cloud of toxic gas from the Rumanian side of the Danube).

In the Belgrade communiqué the Foreign Ministers refer to a "gradual and realistic approach" to cooperation. They note that bilateral ties and their progress are the prerequisite for a favourable extension of multilateral contacts.

The latter were the subject of the majority of practical proposals. On the initiative of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria mention was also made of cooperation in combating terrorism and drug trafficking.

Bulgaria and Rumania, the two Balkan members of the Warsaw Pact, were somewhat left in the lurch in their bids to promote a nuclear and chemical weapons-free zone.

Foreign Minister Yilmaz of Turkey failed to mention the project at all, while his Greek counterpart Papoulias, whose Prime Minister, Mr Papandreou, has often canvassed support for it in the past, made do with a brief remark to the effect that it was no longer urgent given the global arms reduction and disarmament talks between the superpowers.

The subject of minorities was mainly mentioned by Turkey and Albania. It was discussed in general terms under the heading "humanitarian cooperation" and invariably without mentioning any particular country.

In the final communiqué Rumania was no longer happy to refer to minorities as "bridges" to cooperation, so they were merely referred to as "factors" for cooperation and understanding.

In this connection noises off were even heard from the host country, Yugoslavia, with the Albanian delegation far from pleased with the strongly-worded Macedonian attacks, made during the Belgrade conference, on the Albanian minority in Macedonia and on the leadership in neighbouring Kosovo province.

There were occasional remarks that a distinction must nowadays be drawn between a "Yugoslavian" Belgrade and a "Serbian" Belgrade where views on other nations and nationalities were voiced that were conducive neither to cooperation within Yugoslavia nor to cooperation in the Balkans.

Since the Balkan wars the emphasis has always been on the Balkans for the Balkan peoples. This slogan continues to be voiced and is aimed against the influence of great powers in the region.

The Soviet Union sent the Belgrade gathering a cordial telegram, but a Budapest newspaper recalled the blow Stalin dealt the post-war plans by Tito and Dimitrov for a Balkan federation and the statements made by the Soviet Union early in the Brezhnev era disapproving of cooperation between the Danube countries.

Viktor Meier

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 27 February 1988)

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■ WESTERN EUROPE

The Twelve plan monetary union and central bank

Following the success of the European Community summit in Brussels new plans are already being forged.

Apart from the goal of creating a single internal market by 1992 there are plans to set up a monetary union and a European central bank.

These initiatives are strongly backed by leading French politicians.

Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher has called for the setting up of a group of experts during the June Community summit in Hanover to elaborate basic guidelines for the development of a European monetary zone and statutes for a European central bank.

That an objective which has been pursued since the 1960s enjoys renewed relevance despite numerous setbacks is not solely due to the unbroken inclination of French politicians to devise new monetary systems.

The prospect of a real Common Market of 320 million Europeans makes the desire to create a common currency and a European central bank easier to understand.

In order to hold its ground against its major competitors America and Japan, Europe must summon up all its resources.

The exchange-rate turbulences of recent months, which again made the dependence on the dollar painfully clear, also suggest that a strengthening of the European monetary system is more than expedient.

Why is France currently so keen on forcing this issue and emphasising the urgency of tasks in this field?

What prompts Herr Genscher, who is not an economic and monetary policy expert, to put this difficult and complicated topic back on the agenda and thus comply with French desires?

Presidential elections will be held in France in May. French Finance Minister Edouard Balladur, who is one of the most ardent advocates of the new monetary system, hopes to help Prime Minister Jacques Chirac to victory.

M. Chirac, however, has to cope with the dilemma that nobody takes any notice of France in everyday monetary activities worldwide. Interest focuses on the dollar, the deutschemark or the yen.

This fact of life is difficult to stomach for politicians who regard themselves as representatives of a *grande nation*.

What is more, they don't like the idea of the European Monetary System being viewed as a deutschemark bloc in which the hard currency of the Federal Republic of Germany calls the tune.

M. Chirac makes no secret of the fact that he is not interested in a European Monetary System as it functions at the moment.

He has already threatened to pull France out of the EMS if the Federal Republic retains its dominating position.

The constraint of having to gear its activities to the strict German stability policy doesn't fit in with the role of leader M. Chirac envisages for his country in the European Community.

This is one explanation why Paris came up with the idea of gaining influence on the monetary policy pursued by Bonn via a Franco-German finance and economic council. The new institution is viewed sceptically by many Germans. They fear that Paris will use this instrument to circumvent the tough monetary policy line adopted by the Bundesbank.

If the French have their way, the council, which is made up of the Economics and Finance Ministers as well as the central bank presidents of both countries, will serve as a means of "coordinating" their respective monetary policies.

The Bundesbank's refusal to allow its hands to be tied and make the participation of its president Karl Otto Pöhl contingent on the bank's commitment to independence has put Bonn in an awkward position.

The Bonn government would prefer to avoid a preamble to the council's constitutive treaty explicitly confirming the Bundesbank's autonomy.

However, the public interest aroused by this project and the broad support for monetary officials in Frankfurt provide plenty of food for thought for Bonn.

When the stability of the deutschemark is at stake most Germans become less fervent in their support for Europe.

Herr Genscher's initiative must be viewed in conjunction with his role in the process of European agreement.

During his many years as Foreign Minister he has been one of the pacemakers who repeatedly tried to give fresh impetus to the Community.

He has always favoured close cooperation with Paris and thought in political categories.

Although he also calls for an independent European central bank and for a policy of stability, he realises that Paris has a different definition of stability and the autonomy of a central bank.

The Bundesbank is the only Community central bank which can autonomously shape its monetary policy, if need be against the wishes of the Bonn government.

In other European Community countries the central banks are not much more than subdivisions of their Finance Ministries. There is no barrier to the exaggerated spending desires of those in government.

A common currency and a European central bank, therefore, will only be possible if agreement is reached on how stability policy is to be defined.

Those familiar with the woeful history of efforts to harmonise the European economy ask themselves whether a roof is currently being constructed for a house which has yet to be built.

Heinz Stadlmann

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 4 March 1988)

European Community and Central America confer in Hamburg

DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES SONNTAGSBLATT

The 21 European Community and Latin American Foreign Ministers at the fourth San José conference in Hamburg seemed relaxed and optimistic when they faced the press in Hamburg's Congress Centre on 1 March.

Bonn's Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who chaired the conference in his capacity as acting president of the European Council, spoke of a "new climate of optimism," an "exchange of views beneficial to all" and "fresh impetus for the process of peace in Central America."

The spokesman for the Central American states, the Honduran Foreign Minister Lopez Contreras, confirmed Genscher's optimistic assessment: "We can all go back home satisfied," he said.

But what — apart from the verbose declarations of support for peace and progress — has San José IV given the crisis region of Central America in the form of tangible results?

An economic "plan of action" was top of the list the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua brought with them in the hope of gaining the support of their European Community colleagues.

The document, 150 pages long, contains proposals on food aid, the stimulation of the more-than-ailing Central American economies, the scaling-down of the debt burden, and the repatriation of refugees.

The estimated costs of the plan, which is scheduled to last three years, are roughly $1.5bn.

In line with the motto "no peace, no development; no development, no peace" it represents the economic counterpart to the political peace treaty of Guatemala.

At the beginning of the conference Señor Lopez Contreras optimistically outlined the hopes of the Central American states.

The plan of action, he explained, makes it possible for the European Community "to provide the assistance it has so often announced."

Although the Europeans showed their willingness to fundamentally back the "Marshall Plan" for Central America they were not willing to make concrete financial commitments.

However, the European Community did make a commitment to provide emergency food aid, step up its refugee aid and support elections to a Central American parliament.

The Community stated that it would only be willing to deal with the reflation proposals for the Central American economies following what Herr Genscher called "concretisation" of the plan.

Nevertheless, the Central Americans seemed satisfied with the outcome of the conference. "We did not expect miracles," said Costa Rica's Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal.

Although not all expectations were fulfilled in the field of economic aid Central America can continue to count on the political support of the Europeans.

This support is particularly appreciated by Nicaragua, which is constantly in danger of being isolated by the pressure of the USA and its allies in Central America.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto praised the positive role of the European Community.

"We all want to strengthen our political independence, and Europe has held out its 'brotherly hand' to help us," he said.

So much for peace and unity at the San José conference in Hamburg. The apparent unspoilt harmony, however, was achieved at the price of excluding many controversial issues.

How the realisation of the peace treaty should be verified in future was not dealt with at the conference. Neither was monitoring of human rights.

The fact that no progress has been made whatsoever with regard to these key issues was emphasised by the representatives of human rights organisations from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras invited to Hamburg by German solidarity groups.

Mirna Perla de Anaya, for example, the widow of the head of El Salvador's independent human rights commission murdered at the end of October 1987, accused the Christian Democratic government in El Salvador of misusing the peace treaty to "step up violence."

The police and the army in her country, she complained, were pursuing an even more brutal crackdown against opposition trade unionists, members of church and human rights groups.

Ronal Hoenes, president of the Guatemalan human rights commission, and Ramon Custodio, the head of the human rights commission in Honduras, denounced the systematic torture, political murders and kidnappings in their countries.

Custodio drew a bitter conclusion: "There have been no improvements in the field of human rights since Esquipulas II. The situation is as alarming as it ever was."

The complaints of the human rights campaigners from Central America, however, were not heard at the conference of Foreign Ministers taking place just a few hundred metres away.

Even though it may not suit the ministers' desire for harmony they should find more outspoken words on the subject of human rights during San José V in Honduras next year.

Corinna Reinke

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 6 March 1988)

Twelve-member European Community super-market

The Twelve

Number of consumers . . . (population in millions)

Purchasing power . . . (private spending in $bn)

The Twelve: 2,840 $bn — 324m people

USA: 3,140 $bn — 246m

Japan: 1,500 $bn — 123m

(1988 estimates)

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■ HOME AFFAIRS

'Nice guy' Hoffmann stands in Schleswig-Holstein

Social Democrat Björn Engholm is not surprised (if not particularly pleased) at being wished all the best by Christian Democrat "nice guy" Heiko Hoffmann, newly-elected CDU leader in Schleswig-Holstein, where voters are to go to the polls on 8 May.

Justice Minister Hoffmann, chosen to lead the CDU in a "fresh start" after last year's local Watergate affair, clearly feels it is democratic good manners to wish one's party-political rivals well in this way.

SPD Opposition leader Engholm, who served as Education Minister in Bonn under Chancellor Schmidt, doubtless gets the message but is evidently far from sure how to take this new, peace-loving CDU, and his scepticism is by no means unwarranted.

Herr Hoffmann was pulled out of the hat by the CDU only a few weeks ago and can by no means be sure of leading a party that has learnt its lesson and is ready to make amends for its dirty tricks in last year's state assembly election campaign.

A newly brought to light October 1986 strategy paper advocating attacks on Björn Engholm's "personal sensitivities" was penned by the CDU's Schleswig-Holstein business manager Rolf Rüdiger Reichardt, who has come in for little criticism and is still running the party's day-to-day affairs.

Herr Hoffmann sounded somewhat annoyed at these revelations about the origins of what came to be known as the Barschel affair. His aim is to restore the CDU's credibility, and such reminders are anything but welcome.

Born in Stettin, brought up in the GDR, Hoffmann, 52, came to the Federal Republic as an 18-year-old.

He clearly had no ambitions to take over from the late Uwe Barschel, who was found dead in a Geneva hotel last autumn.

He merely agreed to do the party's bidding and will be well aware that many Christian Democrats see him as no more than a makeshift.

In the circumstances the CDU needed to choose a leader who showed signs of readiness to make amends. He feels sure the disputes that lie ahead within the CDU will be a test of strength.

His aim is to lead the party in such a way that he can survive the poll outcome. As an election campaigner he naturally exudes an air of confidence, but not to a degree out of keeping with the battered reputation of his party.

Yet, oddly enough, everything he counsels by way of a return to sound, democratic local government in Schleswig-Holstein amounts to an acknowledgement of the need for power to change hands.

As campaign leader of the ruling party he can hardly be expected to admit that the CDU is likely to lose power, but Heiko Hoffmann, who feels a political affinity with Richard von Weizsäcker and Walter Wallmann, can fairly be said to be prepared to take over as Opposition leader after the voters have cast their verdict.

He will then, he already realises, face furious CDU criticism. Some Christian Democrats are sure to accuse him of the very qualities that many leading members of the party in Schleswig-Holstein now feel make him the only suitable candidate to lead the CDU in the present election campaign.

He has already disparagingly been said to have the qualities required of a psychiatrist and to be a poor leader lacking in toughness.

Largely unknown even in Schleswig-Holstein, he admits he is not a "*decision-making machine*" or the sort of man who has a different message to proclaim by the way.

He sees himself as a thoughtful, contemplative person.

Yet he made his way politically in Gerhard Stoltenberg's CDU (the Bonn Finance Minister was CDU leader and Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein for many years in the 1970s and early 1980s).

He was CDU leader in the Kiel state assembly for many years and served Uwe Barschel as Justice Minister for just over two years.

As Justice Minister he saw no need to urge the Lübeck public prosecutor to deal more energetically with the suits filed by Herr Engholm.

He now says the way Dr Barschel ran the government was not how he would have run affairs, but he "respected" it.

As a practising Christian he was upset at the way Dr Barschel had asked his secretary whether she believed in God, and when she said yes embarked on a crude argument against the SPD.

Herr Hoffmann was either unaware of the CDU's "dirty tricks" or lacked the civic courage to put a damper on the CDU's determination to retain power at all costs.

He now plans to make amends jointly with the other parties, saying Schleswig-Holstein would do well to show greater respect, along Anglo-Saxon lines, for political opponents.

The Opposition leader's role must be given greater legal status, while that of the Prime Minister needs to be weakened by Parliament.

Herr Hoffmann does not need to change his own political style. Schleswig-Holstein Social Democrats readily



agree that he has always been a reliable opposite number where parliamentary agreements were concerned.

He has always taken care to ensure that political adversaries have not lost face.

He was the first, and so far only, CDU speaker in the state assembly to be applauded by the SPD when he addressed the House on marital violence.

Gert Börnsen, SPD parliamentary business manager, accordingly feels Herr Hoffmann must not be underestimated. Indeed, he is a "stroke of good luck" for the CDU.

Herr Börnsen is far from unhappy to see the new CDU "nice guy" dent the SPD's confidence that it will win the elections.

Maybe, in the final analysis, Herr Hoffmann is a stroke of good luck for the SPD too. All Herr Engholm is prepared to say is that his CDU opposite number is a "nice guy" and a "guarantee of the fundamental principle of fair play."



All smiles in pre-election Kiel: Christian Democrat Heiko Hoffmann, left, and Social Democratic challenger Björn Engholm (Photo: dpa)

He hopes that the long-term result of the Barschel affair will be a better relationship between government and Opposition in Kiel. But he only hopes it will.

He seems to have recovered somewhat from last year's mud-slinging but is still speechless when friends and foes accuse him of being too sensitive or too thin-skinned — as though they were qualities that ill-befitted a politician.

Fellow-Social Democrats were worried when at one stage he seemed to withdraw from politics entirely for weeks.

What with murder threats, fears for his family's safety, his mother's death and the constant, no-holds-barred bids, especially by the gutter Press, to capitalise on the private life of a man harrassed by a power-mad Barschel, painting it in imaginative and unappetising colours, Björn Engholm felt he was at the receiving end of a "pogrom" and seriously considered quitting politics.

He now stands to lead the Social Democrats to victory at the polls. Waging a campaign in the aftermath of the Barschel affair naturally comes easier to him than it does to Herr Hoffmann.

The SPD is basing its campaign on much the same issues as last year, with few changes except, perhaps, for the possible introduction of constitutional checks to a political party's striving for power.

Schleswig-Holstein's Social Democrats have no intention of campaigning for vengeance, and not just because restraint may be tactically advantageous.

The SPD has yet to waste time wondering how it can best deal with the CDU "jobs for the boys" network in Schleswig-Holstein.

This is due partly to the need to concentrate first and foremost on the election campaign, and partly to the fact that the SPD hardly know how to set about breaking the CDU stranglehold on appointments in the civil service and at schools and universities.

How are non-Christian Democrats to be enabled to gain as much as a toehold in the bureaucracy? All that can be said for sure is that the process will take longer than a single, four-year parliamentary term. That is a point on which Herr Engholm is already clear.

In the more distant future, however, the political climate in Kiel, the *Land* capital, may no longer be liable to comparison with that of feudal or absolutist principalities.

Sten Martenson

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 16 February 1988)

Krollmann quits as Hesse SPD leader

Hans Krollmann, SPD Opposition leader in the Hesse state assembly, has quit. Pressure on him to resign grew steadily as he suffered one setback after another in the parliamentary party and the party at large.

On losing power in Hesse in April last year the Social Democrats, accustomed to the reins of power in Wiesbaden, retired to the Opposition benches with fairly little idea of how to handle the situation.

They lacked the firm hand of a leader capable of uniting the various factions, each of which claimed to know better than the others what was to be done.

Herr Krollmann, who in office did well by Hesse and by the SPD, is clearly not the man to command respect over and above the various factions and to point the way to Opposition policies generally accepted within the party.

The Hesse Social Democrats are not the only party to have difficulty in coming to terms with the chill winds of change that swept them into Opposition.

When the CDU lost power in Bonn in 1969 it underwent enormous programmatic, organisational and personnel convulsions before finally regaining an even keel in the 1970s.

Then as now, it is clear that former Cabinet Ministers are not always the stuff of which leadership in Opposition is made.

Ernst Welteke, the new parliamentary party leader in Wiesbaden, was Herr Krollmann's predecessor in the post, so at first glance he might not seem to be a very convincing choice.

But his election does testify to a desire on the Social Democrats' part to rejuvenate their leadership.

It also seems reasonable to infer that he will not inevitably be the party's choice as *Land* SPD leader when Herr Krollmann stands down at the next party conference.

There is an evident tendency among Hesse's Social Democrats to share out power between several leaders.

Yet that will still leave them with the problem of how to present uniform Opposition policies that appear credible to the general public.

Reinhold Noll

(Mannheimer Morgen, 23 February 1988)

■ ANNIVERSARY

Federal Republic, 40 next year, still lacks a national day

In an essay entitled *Zur politischen Kultur der Bundesrepublik* (On the Political Culture of the Federal Republic) Martin Greiffenhagen, a professor of political science in Stuttgart, criticised the Federal Republic of Germany's lack of state symbols.

In the latest issue of the legal weekly *Neue Juristische Wochenschrift* Klaus Hümmerich, a professor of law in Bonn, pointed out that there is no national holiday and that, by law, the *Deutschlandlied* is not the national anthem and hence not legally protected against disparagement.

This situation is unlikely to change much next year, a year in which the Bonn government will be spending DM13m to celebrate "40 Years of the Federal Republic of Germany".

In a special programme paper Horst Waffenschmidt, parliamentary secretary of state in the Bonn Interior Ministry and the Bonn government's coordinator for the jubilee year, has presented a list of 120 "projects and measures" planned to mark the occasion.

Congresses, competitions, films, posters, commemorative stamps and coins and even a relay race through the *Länder* are in preparation.

On 23 May, the day the Basic Law was promulgated, a "ceremony for all constitutional organs" is planned in the Bonn Beethovenhalle, and a "national celebration" will be held for 100,000

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

guests in the Bonn Rheinauen park on 23 September.

Herr Waffenschmidt says the celebrations are not intended as "a jubilee celebration for the government" or a "bombastic state celebration," but as a "celebration for all citizens."

The 40 years are worth a special year of celebration, he says, as "they represent an outstanding period which has given us the most liberal and most social constitutional state which has ever existed on German soil."

Critics of Waffenschmidt's programme have discovered lacunae. There is no mention, for example, of a parade by the Bundeswehr or of symbols which exemplify the pride in the achievements of the past 40 years.

What is more, they complain, the subject of a "national holiday" was not even properly discussed.

The Bonn Interior Ministry has clearly stated that a "holiday is not planned," neither as a once-only day of celebration nor as a permanent national holiday.

The controversy is as old as the Federal Republic of Germany itself and has always been a hot issue. Everyone who has tried to tackle it in the past has burnt his fingers.

Up to now, the only official "national holiday" was held on 12 September 1951 to commemorate the second anniversary of the election of the Federal President, although it was no real holiday as such. Children were given the day off school, but people had to go to work.

One year later, a "day of commemoration" was celebrated on 7 September to mark the occasion of the first session of the Bundestag.

The uprising in East Berlin and in other East German towns and cities against the Communist regime on 17 June, 1953, put an end to the discussion for many years: "German Unity Day" has been celebrated on this date ever since.

A bill in which the Bonn government set out in 1968 to drop 17 June as an official day off work and replace it by 23 May (the foundation date of the Federal Republic) as a national holiday came to nothing.

The opponents of this initiative maintained that 17 June must keep alive the idea of German reunification.

Trade unions claimed that the day off work on 17 June had become a "social asset." The only option they were willing to discuss was an additional holiday, but this idea was rejected by the employers.

All the discussion produced was the regular celebration of this date by the German embassies abroad.

Strange as it may seem, the Federal Republic of Germany only has a *de facto* national holiday abroad.

Helmut Schmidt made a renewed attempt to "swap" 23 May for 17 June in 1979.

A new argument forwarded in the discussion at that time was that, in its capacity as trustee for Germany as a whole, the Federal Republic of Germany should choose a national holiday which could be celebrated by the whole of Germany.

The day on which the Bonn constitution was introduced, critics claimed, could not be celebrated by the GDR.

Those who favoured 23 May, however, felt that Germans in the GDR could also celebrate this date, since it marked the beginning of a significant democratic development for the whole of Germany.

Annemarie Renger suggested that 17 June should be retained as a day of commemoration (and a day off work) and that 23 May should become an additional national holiday.

A committee chaired by ex-Berlin Mayor Heinrich Albertz came up with the idea of making 18 March, the day on which citizens rose in arms against the king of Prussia in 1848, a national holiday.

The Bonn Interior Ministry points towards the next round-figure anniversary by way of consolation. "Maybe the 50th anniversary of the Federal Republic of Germany is a befitting occasion," it stresses.

Bonn also feels that there is no reason for a special law for the national anthem.

A court case in Cologne last year against a singer who disparaged the national anthem brought the legal deficiency to light.

Although Section 90a of the Criminal Code stipulates up to three years imprisonment for disparagement of the colours, the flag, the emblem and the anthem of the Federal Republic of Germany only the

Continued on page 14

Postwar history museum takes shape in Bonn

"Parliamentary democracy knows no decreed conception of history." This is the maxim Hermann Schäfer, the first director of the House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany planned in Bonn, has chosen for his project.

It is scheduled for completion in 1992/93, and it is hoped that the bill creating a corresponding public law foundation will pass through the Bundestag this year.

The Bonn cabinet has already approved the draft bill.

The Bonn Minister for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development, Oscar Schneider, explained that the project represents a further step by the Bonn government to extend Bonn.

The aim is to present the history of the Federal Republic of Germany against the background of the division of Germany.

Schäfer intends splitting the exhibition into five sections, depicting five phases of postwar history.

The topics in the first section are: "The Policies of the Victorious Powers," "The Foundation of Democracy in West Germany" and "Fundamental Economic and Social Policy Decisions."

This section will be complemented by the complexes "Burden and Responsibility of the Past," "Historical Prerequisites of the Constitutional Order," "The Path to the Division of Germany" and "Expulsion, Flight and Integration."

A walk through the museum then leads on to the fifth section: "The new Ostpolitik," "Problems of the Seventies" and "the Federal Republic of Germany in the World."

Schäfer's project is not modelled on already existing projects.

His collection of material not only relates to items of political history, but also to items of "social, economic, cultural, mentality and art history."

Schäfer feels that it is no more than logically consistent for the museum's collection to follow its conception.

Numerous interesting objects from postwar history have awaited their discovery for museum purposes.

Schäfer's intention is that visitors to his museum should be able to see the past and the future — both spatially and historically — when wandering through the exhibition.

The five sections will be displayed separately in hall-like rooms, but it will always be possible to see the various levels.

Depending on the "perspective" visitors will be able to command a view of all the phases of the historical reality of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In line with their own knowledge of history and memories they can look at the exhibition from whichever angle they wish.

According to the historian Schäfer the museum's task cannot be to present or justify party-political conceptions of history.

The guideline should be a conception of history "geared to plurality and perspective".

In all probability, an initial workshop exhibition will be presented in Bonn in autumn as a first step towards the permanent exhibition.

Klaus J. Schwehn

(Die Welt, Bonn, 5 February 1988)

■ **FISCAL POLICY**

Bonn is its own worst enemy when it comes to 'selling' tax reforms

The Bonn coalition alone knows why it pursues its tax reform policies in such a dogged and sullen manner.

A tax reform package that was hailed as its major achievement has now been reduced to chaos, says Bavarian Finance Minister Max Streibl.

Others may agree, but what Herr Streibl forgot to add was that the bitter public attacks he and Bavarian Premier Franz Josef Strauss are constantly launching on Bonn Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg are partly to blame for this chaos.

The latest bone of contention is the proposed withholding tax, which will tax at source interest paid on bank deposits.

The Finance Bill outlining details of the tax reform, including the withholding tax, is over 400 pages long and has been available in a first version for some time.

Views differ on whether Finance Ministry officials made a "sloppy job" of the draft or Herr Strauss and CSU representatives merely failed to grasp what was going on when the coalition talks and subsequent expert discussions were held last year.

They certainly sounded surprised that no exemptions from withholding tax were foreseen, not even for the Churches and charities, and their surprise soon grew into outrage.

There is no justification for this sense of outrage. Even if the CSU may feel it



has been misled, the Bill has not yet even been approved by the Cabinet, let alone cleared its parliamentary hurdles.

So it will be a while before it takes its final shape. Which is anything but unusual. All major tax proposals, under the present coalition and under its SPD-FDP predecessor, have been riddled with disputes over the small print that have taken time to solve in committee.

That is sure to be the case this time too, so there is no point in holding a major debate on fiscal fundamentals on such a relative technicality as who is to be exempted from withholding tax.

Yet the Federal government itself repeatedly fuels the fires of suspicion that all is not entirely above board. It is now, for instance, considering postponing for a week the presentation of the Bill to the Cabinet for consideration.

That would delay presentation until after the mid-March Baden-Württemberg state assembly elections.

But if the tax reform proposals are right and necessary, then surely the arguments in their favour must stand up to electoral scrutiny!

Manoeuvres of this kind make no difference to the fact that arguments in favour of the withholding tax are stronger than arguments against it, no matter how controversial it may be.

It may not be the best way to tax interest. The tax rate, 10 per cent, defies logical explanation, as does the exemption of interest on deposits in ordinary savings accounts.

Other objections may also be raised, but in principle there can be no objection to taxing at source income that is in any case liable to income or corporation tax.

Earned income is almost invariably taxed at source, with little or no possibility of evading the taxman's clutches.

Unearned income stands a much better chance of doing so. There is a wide range of opportunities for what the inland revenue wryly calls tax avoidance.

Avoidance or evasion, both run counter to the principle of just and equitable taxation.

In principle Herr Strauss would not for a moment disagree. He only recently noted that the taxation of earnings on capital was more important today than it used to be.

He can only have meant that earned income will probably increase only modestly in the years ahead, whereas earnings from capital investment will increase more generously.

This is the result of a relatively long phase of growing affluence during which more and more people have been able to save and invest.

The state would not only be in breach of fiscal justice, it would also be engaging in self-denial if it were not to try and make sure of its share of these earnings.

Attempts to provide for all manner of exceptions before even deciding in favour of the general principle smack of German perfectionism.

Many pundits talk as though the proposed withholding tax was something new and unprecedented. In reality it already exists in many other countries, and in some it is enforced even more rigorously than is envisaged in the Federal Republic.

It is now for the experts to decide against taxing interest where that would run counter to overriding interests. The Churches, social or cultural foundations and charitable societies are obviously first in line for exemption.

Bonn policymakers and coalition leaders must, however, be clear in their own minds that every exemption will limit the scope of the tax reform package.

If exemptions are made that will reduce revenue by, say, DM500m a year, then DM500m a year will need to be raised somewhere else. The country's financial straits do not permit generosity.

The coalition may continue to argue the point. It proved well able to argue about the highest rate of income and corporation tax and on how to finance the entire tax reform package.

Alternatively, the government and the coalition could at long last agree to stand by their tax reform package and persuade the public that it will do them a power of good.

Heinz Murmann

(Kölner *Stadt-Anzeiger*, Cologne, 26 February 1988)

Withholding tax: small print obscures package's merits

It is easy to say that our tax system is a wild growth and anything but systematic. It is, after all, the truth.

But to remedy the situation and return to a simple system that encourages the productive forces in the economy is immensely difficult in a "one good turn deserves another" welfare state such as ours.

This is amply apparent from the third stage of the major tax reform package, scheduled in 1990 to relieve the burden on the taxpayer by a further DM20bn.

The first stage in 1986 cut taxes by roughly DM11bn. The second stage will cut them this year by a further DM14bn. Better depreciation allowances on business premises will cut taxes by a further DM4bn in 1990.

So the total saving will fall little short of DM50bn, which surely deserves to be called a "reform."

Even Professor Heinz Haller, state secretary to SPD Finance Minister Alex Möller, who failed in a similar bid to introduce major tax reforms, agrees that "reform" is the right word.

Even so, Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg, who to his credit is pressing ahead unerringly with the package, is increasingly encountering difficulties.

His main critics are those whose concessions and privileges are being capped or axed so as to gain financial leeway for bankrolling the reform package.

Yet the government has not even attempted to tackle the really substantial recipients of subsidies.

Critics also take a dim view of the proposed increase in duties on motor fuel and tobacco next year, although they have more to do with the heavier cost of financing the European Community than with that of financing the tax reform package.

The government showed courage in announcing so far ahead that these tax increases were in the offing.

Against this background, however, it is growing increasingly difficult to cast the undeniable advantages of the 1990 tax reform package in the shining light it deserves.

The inevitable dispute over the withholding tax on capital earnings is a further headache. The CDU's Bavarian coalition partner, Munich Premier Franz Josef Strauss's CSU, is fuelling the fire, seeming to hope that Herr Stoltenberg will stew in his own juice.

True enough, the withholding tax was, as the CSU points out, first proposed by the Social Democrats and rejected by the CDU/CSU as utter devilry, only to be resurrected by the CDU — and, let it be added, the CSU.

Other industrialised countries have long raised a withholding tax, and earned income has long been taxed at source. Besides, in other countries earnings on capital are taxed at a much higher rate than the 10 per cent proposed by Bonn.

In theory the withholding tax is superfluous. Earnings on capital, i.e. interest and dividend payments, are liable to income and corporation tax in any case. But 50 per cent of taxpayers don't declare them.

Yet even honest taxpayers, for whom the position ought not to change, will be worse off as a result.

They will forfeit 10 per cent of their earnings on capital at source and can only reclaim whatever refund they may be entitled to years later when their income tax returns are finally settled.

So the withholding tax is by no means the same as the tax bonus on dividend earnings to which the taxpayer is entitled when he submits his income tax returns.

Oddly enough, it was the SPD-FDP coalition that abolished double taxation of dividends in the 1970s and it looks



like being the CDU/CSU that is to introduce the withholding tax in 1990.

It is as though the Social Democrats encouraged the accumulation of capital, whereas the Christian Democrats are about to discourage it.

Advocates of a withholding tax (from which, for no clear reason, interest on ordinary savings accounts is to be exempted) nonetheless have sound arguments at their disposal.

There can be no doubt whatever that to dispense with a withholding tax is to encourage tax evasion. Tax evaders will be bankrolling the tax reform package, to the benefit of the honest taxpayers, with an estimated DM4bn a year in withholding tax.

That is surely a telling argument. Or rather, it would be truer to say that the evader is to have an anonymous 10 per cent deducted at source, regardless whether he has his interest credited to a bank account or stuffs the cash away in a safe deposit box or in an old sock under his mattress.

But where is the logic? If tax evaders are to be brought to book, why make them pay a mere 10 per cent? Why not 25 per cent, as recommended by the panel of scientific advisers to the Federal Finance Ministry?

Many another argument can be fielded in connection with the withholding tax. It has certainly not been thought out to its logical conclusion, as the government would like us to believe.

Herr Stoltenberg has announced an amnesty for taxpayers who make strictly honest returns from 1986. Views will differ on whether amnesties as such are right, but this one should certainly stop the inland revenue from poring over everyone's bank accounts.

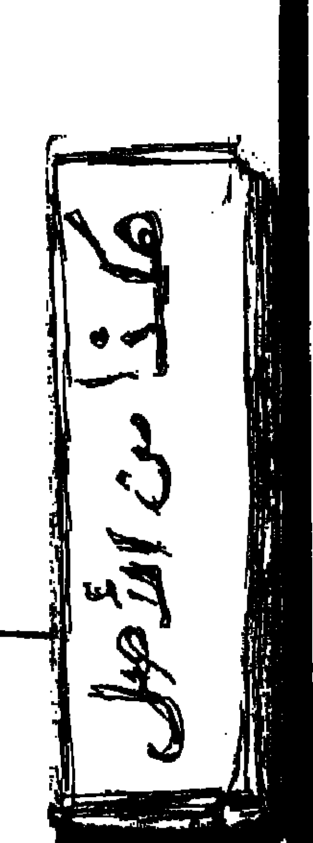
There will doubtless also be an exemption for charities and the Churches, but the fact remains that the withholding tax is a disincentive where private provision for old age is concerned.

Life insurance companies and pension funds can hardly be overjoyed at the prospect. They stand to forfeit 10 per cent of their earnings, which will then not be available for policyholders who have sought to make provision for their old age.

Can this consequence be reconciled with the principles of Christian social teachings?

Franz Thoma

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 23 February 1988)



■ **BUSINESS**

Cologne students offer industry 'free' consultancy services

Leading companies with an international reputation are queueing up to enlist the services of a handful of Cologne business studies students.

Companies who have consulted the 20- to 25-year-old students include Bayer Chemicals and Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz, the engineering group.

"We could sent out a fresh team of advisers every week," Manfred Ritter, 24, and Norbert Neudeck, 23, proudly say.

"We" are a non-profit registered society, OFW, short for Economic Congress Organisation Forum, which at present has about 45 members.

They run a student consultancy on a mutual basis. The companies fund and equip a project team of six to eight students and are presented with proposals for a solution to their problems after four months' work.

Problems can range from strategic company planning, marketing concepts and technical problems to company organisation and personnel planning.

Instead of cash (and it would normally be a handsome fee), students merely gain experience and are certified by the management to have done good work.

Leading industrial companies will naturally think twice before letting outsiders see how they run their businesses, but OFW last year held a superbly organised congress in Cologne on "Outer Space as a Market — The Civilian Use of the Cosmos."

It was attended by international experts from all over the world and was a feather in the cap of a student organisation set up, like many others, out of frustration with university courses remote from practical experience and aimed at remedying this state of affairs.

It wasn't long before the group's board of governors included professors, Ministers, board chairmen and bankers of repute.

Project teams consist mainly of business studies students, but scientists, psychologists, sociologists and engineers are also in demand.

Someone who is keen to join a team, does not need to join the OFW, but he must apply to it and will, should the need or occasion arise, be deployed in keeping with his interests and inclinations.

Student teams last year worked at Bayer, BMW, Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz, Allianz, Nestlé and Procter & Gamble.

This year's companies will include Dornier, Westdeutsche Landesbank, the Cologne municipal savings bank and Commerzbank.

As part of 10 projects this year teams will travel all over Germany, and they are already planning to branch out into international activities.

They will be advising a US corporation in conjunction with Arthur Andersen, the world's largest management consultancy, and PBBO, the world's largest advertising agency.

Don G. Baker, managing director at Arthur Anderesen, has promised to let the students get in training at his company's computers.

OFW activities have branched out in yet another direction. University lectures and events have been joined by a glossy colour "magazine for entrepreneurs and students" hopefully titled *Consens*, or "Consensus."

Cash for such ventures is provided by industry, as are the Cologne offices let by Gerling, the insurance company, at concessional rates.

In return the students provide free advertising, advice and, more infrequently, send in a consultancy team.

They have long been planning a new congress. To be held on 1 March 1989, it will be entitled "Artificial Intelligence — Between Hope and Reality."

They do not see themselves as ambitious career-orientated people, although they do draw a distinction between themselves and students who "sit around studying for 18 semesters and then can't remember why they went to the trouble." They organise their studies, gearing them to specific targets. They have to, spending up to 20 hours a week off the campus. But working for OFW teaches them something they will never learn at university: working as a team and in a company context. That, they say, is what makes it such fun.

Rainer Rudolph

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 13 February 1988)



Manfred Ritter and Norbert Neudeck at their Hahnentorburg, Cologne, office (Photo: Helmut Jüliger)

Stuttgart computer advice centre for small firms

Theophil Teufele's complexion turned a shade of apoplectic red. He would soonest have smashed his fist on his sparingly but tastefully decorated managing director's desk.

For 30 years he had seen himself as a shrewd and successful Swabian entrepreneur, a man everyone in the firm simply referred to as "The Boss."

Now a young whippersnapper who had barely left college was telling him he ran his company badly, or at least not well.

Yet he himself had felt something or other was no longer right in the firm and had called in the expert.

So he pulled himself together, as befitted a man brought up with pietistic religious beliefs, and gave the man from Stuttgart a hearing.

His expert presented a long list of proposals for organisational improvements in workshops and offices.

Three and a half years ago the Advisory Centre for Information Technology (BIT), a division of the Fraunhofer Institute of Business Studies, got down to work under the aegis of the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs in Stuttgart.

The Ministry also being responsible for technology and for policy toward the middle class, BIT has fittingly advised about 260 small and medium-sized firms so far.

All have realised they might fare better in the stiff wind of competition if they were, at long last, to make use of computers in manufacturing and organisation.

Nearly 70 per cent of the companies counselled have less than DM20m a year in turnover and employ a payroll of less than 100, but CIM, or computer-integrated manufacturing, has long begun to interest the middle class.

Before applying to the Fraunhofer Institute for advice 46 per cent of companies had no experience whatever of computers, while 20 per cent at least had a personal computer.

Some of them used their personal computer largely because it had been bought and simply couldn't be left to gather dust.

"Since they have bought the device it must now be used, otherwise they will be the laughing stock of their staff," says BIT's Joachim Niemeier.

He is outlining the situation of many a company-owner who once felt it was fashionable to "invest in data processing" but doesn't really know what benefit he can derive from the new technology.

There is a large number of consultants at the ready to counsel managements on computers. They all claim to be selfless and their services are as unclear as their numbers are large.

"Many feel called on to lend a hand but few are really in a position to help small and medium-sized firms," Niemeier says. That was one of the main reasons why BIT was set up to handle queries.

Inquiries so far have shown computerisation to have made much greater headway in offices than in manufacturing.

That is hardly surprising in that office work such as paying wages and handling orders lends itself much more readily to standardisation than manufacturing what are often individual items made to the customer's specifications and requirements.

A survey of 1,096 capital goods companies by the Business Rationalisation Board (RKW) has shown that in 1986 85 per cent of firms with a payroll of 50 to 100 had computers handle accounts, as against only nine per cent with electronic production planning and control facilities.

In mechanical engineering about eight firms in 10 used electronics to handle accounts and roughly one in two used a word processing system but only 18 per cent had automatic production and control systems.

In electronics 25 per cent of companies used computer-controlled systems, as against a mere 11 per cent in iron, sheet metal and engineering.

Only about two per cent of companies probed were found to have on-line in-house network facilities for construction, production planning, work planning, manufacture and quality control — the advanced stage of CIM, or computer-integrated manufacturing.

"If this percentage is doubled in the next five years," Niemeier says, "then much will have been gained." He feels this figure is realistic: "It is technically feasible, can be financed and would be accepted by staff."

Private consultants have often looked askance at the services provided by the Fraunhofer Institute with its BIT staff of four, but BIT now plans to make greater use of private consultants, partly because it can no longer handle all enquiries.

Talks are to be held in early March with private consultants.

A number of company-owners who have been persuaded that computers are the answer to an entrepreneur's prayers have had to be warned by Niemeier and his associates that electronic data processing is not a sure-fire remedy for all ills.

Problems encountered in introducing computer systems, such as the degree of staff acceptance, must no more be neglected than traditional methods of cost accountancy.

Yet keen interest is shown in computer support, and BIT staff have been known to visit a company where the owner was initially sceptical about computers, then to leave with a gift pack of choice pork and ham products given him by a grateful client.

Theophil Teufele wasn't the client in question. He doesn't hand out gifts. He is saving cash to invest in his computer.

Ulrich Schreyer

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 9 February 1988)

■ INDUSTRY

Technogerma in New Delhi testifies to a growing export market

Economic Affairs Minister Martin Bangemann is flying to India to open Technogerma '88, an exhibition of German industry at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi from 14 to 20 March. Over 250 exhibitors from German trade and industry are taking part. India has become one of the Federal Republic's most important trading partners in the Third World, as shown by its significant participation in the Hanover Fair. India is a sub-continent, a fact often forgotten, and has a population of 800 million. But it is undeveloped as a consumer market and its productivity has a long way to go before it achieves its full potential. Wolfgang Hohmeyer gives here the background to India's current economic position.

India is sounder economically than most other developing countries, yet it will only develop slowly, if surely, in future.

Still, over the past few years we have not exploited our opportunities as well as we might have done.

This view is heard frequently from German company representatives in Delhi or Bombay. Complaints about previous Bonn policies are no longer voiced.

After years of "not quite knowing what we were doing" there seems to be a change in attitude towards trade with India. This year the country has been officially "rediscovered."

The Technogerma exhibition is being staged in an attempt to satisfy Indian requirements for advanced technology. It is under the patronage of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Premier Rajiv Gandhi.

Hans-Gerd Neglein, a member of the Siemens board and chairman of the Siemens Technogerma committee, said:

"There will be more discussions between India and Germany at this exhibition than ever before."

During a visit to Delhi and four other Indian industrial centres he told his Indian partners that Technogerma would be "the largest advanced technology exhibition ever mounted outside Germany."

There are 270 German firms represented in Delhi, including majors from the chemicals, engineering, car manufacturing, electronics, electrical engineering, aviation and space industries.

Many of these companies have been represented in the Indian market for years, of course, but after the initial euphoria scepticism set in.

Complaints were made about too much red tape, too many official restrictions and too many unknown factors. Indian "Socialism" has developed its own system of compartmentalisation that does not please go-ahead businessmen.

A fresh wind blew through India's stagnating trade and industry when the Rajiv Gandhi government came into power in 1984. The liberalisation introduced since then has inspired German industry to make new efforts in the Indian market.

But experts in Indian trade know that it is too much to expect an "open door" policy yet. Nevertheless the situation has been eased all round, particularly as regards advanced technology and the possibilities for cooperation in the capital goods sector.

Yet against this there is little that can be done as regards consumer goods, and the market is sown up for cars and leisure electronics. In these sectors the Japanese have a commanding position.

In the 1960s the Japanese were almost unknown in the Indian market. In that period Indo-German cooperation achieved its greatest triumphs.

But both sides were disappointed with the construction of the Rourkela steelworks. Other setbacks were experienced at this time due to political conflicts and as a consequence of recession.

India regarded itself as threatened by China and indirectly by the USA via Pakistan, so the country inevitably turned towards the Soviet Union.

Friendly relations with Moscow were not regarded approvingly by Bonn at that time. Development aid was generously continued but political relations remained for many years cool and correct.

A 50-year-old Indian manager, who today works for a major German firm, said:

"At that time the Germans could only think about China. We were aware of that at the universities 20 years ago."

He continued: "We Indians were not taken seriously. While we were building up several projects, some spectacular, some a mistake, the Chinese were ruining their country with the Cultural Revolution.

"Intellectuals in Europe were applauding this at the time while we in India were pushing through the Green Revolution in agriculture."

"There was little international recognition of the fact that in 1980 for the first time we no longer had to import foodstuffs because we became self-sufficient," he added.

Critical comments of this kind are often heard in India, expressed mainly "among friends." Officialdom prefers to remain silent.

Most engineers, technicians and scientists, trained usually in the West, are convinced that a false image of India

Frankfurter Rundschau

is too deeply ingrained in Europe and America.

Critics of the "Indian way of doing things" saw only the country's modest gross national product growth rate that for almost the past 20 years has hovered around 3.5 per cent.

In view of the population explosion this relatively static figure cannot bode well for the country.

In South America and a few other developing countries economic planners have come out for modern concepts that promise dynamic development in the future.

The oil price explosion shattered these dreams. Today Brazil and Mexico are being strangled almost to death by an enormous debt burden and their industries, built up with credits from abroad, are staggering on the verge of bankruptcy.

India, on the other hand, is in a position, "believe it or not, to open its doors and invite foreign investors in for cooperation agreements while the rest of the world is again talking of protectionism."

Just at this time a catastrophic recession has had to begin again, but the old economic rules are no longer valid in India.

It was never denied in the past that after a long drought the other sectors of industry would have to handle a bitter relapse.

The last time this was the case was in 1979/1980. The monsoon rains failed to materialise then. Agricultural production dropped by a good 17 per cent.

Shortages led to considerable price increases. Industry suffered and gross national product dropped by five per cent.

But that was eight years ago. Indian experts now take the view that the Indian economy shows surprising elasticity.

The governor of the Reserve Bank of India, R. N. Malhotra, commented:

"The economy is performing better than expected. I believe that to a certain extent it is no longer sensitive to drought."

The results for 1987 were definitely surprising. The drought was worse than ever — the rainfall index remained 20 per cent below average — but that had no effect on economic growth.

The results for 1987/1988 are expected to be positive (a growth rate of 1.7 per cent), less than the previous two years (growth of 4.9 and 5.5 per cent) but, in view of the enormous difficulties that had to be met, it is a satisfactory result.

Commentators in the news magazine *India Today*, rather sceptically inclined, said:

"A drought year should be bad news and cause long faces, but after the worst drought of the century the mood is still good and industry is not under pressure."

Industrial production has increased by between six and eight per cent due to the export boom, up 26 per cent in the first half of 1987.

A comparison with a similar situation in the 1960s shows to what extent the state and economy are now able to withstand drought.

In the 1965/1967 period there was drought, one year after another, just like the past two years.

This not only caused hunger strikes in certain parts of the country but the government almost went bankrupt because 40 per cent of its planned investment programme could only go ahead with financial aid from abroad. It took several years to get over this recession.

There is no talk of a similar situation today for "this is the first drought year in which the government has resolved to release additional funds for the construction of irrigation projects."

Twenty years ago a third of India's agricultural produce was grown on irrigated land. Today two-thirds comes from irrigated land.

Yet this independence from monsoon rains did not stop the harvest dropping last year to 141 million tons. In the previous year 150 tons of grain were brought in.

Thanks to the "Green Revolution" over the past few years 25 million tons of wheat, rice and other foodstuffs have been siloed, which can now be drawn upon.

In the past shortages of oil and pulses have had to be covered by imports, but Indian farmers have been able to cope with this crisis themselves.

This deserves respect and one Indian farmer (and not only he) asked: "Has the Soviet Union been able to do that?"

It goes without saying that India will have to face up to the consequences of the drought.

Budget planning has been upset considerably, made worse by the Indian peace-keeping force in Sri Lanka.

The government is obviously trying to plug the holes in the budget. The state-subsidised prices for coal, sugar and cooking oil were increased last December by 22 per cent and in January there was an increase in the price of petrol.

This is somewthing of a paradox when world oil prices are falling, but it is linked to the devaluation of the rupee.

The Indian currency has dropped more dramatically than the dollar. It lost about 20 per cent of its value against the American dollar last year.

Financial experts do not believe that in the current financial year (ending on 31 March) the inflation rate can be held below ten per cent.

Third World success

This was the situation up to the end of December but the latest price increases will now be having their full effect.

But it is wrong to compare India in this context with Switzerland or the Federal Republic.

It would be more appropriate to use Brazil or Mexico for comparison purposes — in comparison with Brazil's and Mexico's three-digit inflation rate the Indian rate can be regarded as a notable success.

But economic statistics reveal neither the political nor social conditions of a society. This is where India's problems are today.

Farmers in Bihar or Orissa are indifferent to the concerns of budget and finance politicians or any successes they might achieve. They only see that the drought has put additional burdens on their shoulders.

Many fields can now only be irrigated by water from tube wells — and someone has to pay for the electricity to power the pumps.

Farmers are demanding relief such as higher prices for their produce or deferment of payment and partial remission of their debts.

There have already been demonstrations and hunger strikes in some provinces.

To this can be added the political disturbances in the Punjab and North Bengal where Sikhs and Gurkhas are struggling for more autonomy.

But in addition authority has been harmed by the arms and corruption scandals, which still have to be explained and which involved the Prime Minister in 1987.

But Indian businessmen are composed. They say: "India is a continent. That is often forgotten. There is frequent trouble in Europe, in Northern Ireland and among the Basques. Does that disturb German export industries?

"And what of Gandhi? He will remain because of TINA — there is no alternative."

Wolfgang Hohmeyer
(Frankfurter Rundschau, 2 March 1988)

■ TELECOM

New-look Bundespost with electronic services

Posts & Telecom Minister Christian Schwarz-Schilling has finally announced details of plans to split the Bundespost into three divisions, separate companies for traditional Post Office services (letters and parcels, counters), banking and telecom respectively, under overall Ministry supervision.

Over the next 20 years telecommunications will be the leading growth industry, businessmen and politicians, in government and in opposition, agree.

By the turn of the century, Bundespost experts say, telecom will have overtaken the automobile industry, at present the leader, in its share of the gross national product.

It is expected that by then the various telecom services will contribute between seven and nine per cent to GNP.

Under pressure from the business world the Bundespost will have to introduce essential changes. It will have to open up more of its markets and face more competition, giving private organistions a bite of the apple.

The Post Office monopoly and commercial undertakings will have to be separated and its operations reorganised.

The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications in Bonn has completed work on its first concept and will shortly send to other government departments preliminary suggestions.

The document will point out how essential it is to introduce reform. The present structure of the postal and telecommunications service is based on outmoded, traditional, historical developments. Because of its lack of flexibility and lack of contact with current market conditions it is no longer in a position to deal with new demands appropriately.

Future demands for postal and telecommunications services are so various that a single operator can no longer meet these demands. The Bundespost alone cannot fulfill all the demands made of the service.

The times for leisurely development are past. The growth rate in conventional telecommunications services such as telephone, telex and telegrams has either stagnated or shown very little upward trend.

In the 1970s the number of new telephone subscribers increased by as many as two million per year. Over the past few years the growth rate has dropped to about 800,000 annually. The outlook for the future is far from rosy either.

New and expanded communications services are required. The experts hope they can be successfully introduced soon in a way similar to telephones.

Surveys show that the largest growth rates will be in that sector where telecommunications, systems for processing information and service industries come together and create new, "intelligent" electronic services.

A name has been found for these activities, "value-added services," because these services offer customers far more than the previous basic services did.

The transmission of speech has been joined by the telecopying of text, pictures and technical drawings. Subscribers can talk and at the same time display documents just as if they were sitting opposite one another. Computer link-ups will also be possible on a large scale.

Estimates show that the growth rate of "value-added services" will produce annual turnover of about DM80bn by the turn of the century.

The authors of the official document expect that the fast-growing market of electronic telecom services will in 20 to 30 years' time be of greater commercial significance than the telephone services have achieved in the almost 100 years of their existence.

At present the new telecom services only account for two per cent of Bundespost turnover.

The Bundespost's reform concept includes maintaining the present network but offering connections leased to commercial users and at rates they are prepared to pay.

There will certainly be competitors from neighbouring EC states at the commencement of the European Community's Single Internal Market at the latest. That will put pressure on prices.

In the future the Bundespost will operate three types of services. One will be the ordinary telephone service, which will continue in its monopoly position.

Alongside this there will be statutory services the Bundespost has to provide such as for example data transmission to remote districts. Private sector organisations will not be prepared to take this on because it does not offer good returns.

The Bundespost is obliged to provide a basic service and will have to make its other services available here too.

The Bundespost's third area of responsibility involves the competition surrounding the profitable electronic services.

Arne Börnsen, an SPD member of the Bundestag, is of the view that the Bundespost must catch up with technical developments.

Börnsen believes that the Bundespost should not only sell the equipment but "supply new services with software."



Christian Schwarz-Schilling
(Photo: Sven Simon)

To this end the Bundespost needs qualified personnel paid at the same levels they could command in industry. This has not yet been considered in the Bundspost's reform programme.

The organisation should be altered at the very least. Three organisations will be set up under one roof: one for the ordinary postal service handling letters, packets and parcels; a second should revolutionise telecommunications and the third organisation the Post Office's banking services.

The SPD and the civil service trades union (covering the postal service) fear that with the creation of the three divisions the mixed financing that has been carried on in the postal services until now will be brought to an end.

The ordinary postal service, which operates at a loss, should continue in future to be supported by the profitable telecommunications business, they argue.

Whether this will work in practice is in no way certain.

Michael Brandt
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 27 February 1988)

TV satellite flatly refuses to spread its solar flaps

The ailing TV-Sat 1 is still not in operation. Three months after the direct radio and television satellite was put in orbit the Bonn Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has announced that the wonder of Franco-German satellite technology is a flop. The satellite has not fallen on its face because of its highly-complicated electronics. It seems that technicians forgot to take out a simple stop-clip before the satellite took off. This prevents the solar panels from opening up and generating the satellite's electric power. So Sat 1 looks like proving an expensive flop.

The TV-Sat 1 satellite weighs more than a Mercedes-Benz, travels at 100,000 kilometres per hour and cost DM870m.

For the past 80 days this Franco-German satellite has been on a course to bankruptcy 36,000 kilometres above the earth.

As things look at the moment TV-Sat will never be able to do what it was designed to do — beam TV pictures into German living-rooms.

The solar panels that are supposed to provide the satellite with energy are jammed. Any number of attempts to release the clip have failed.

As a result the unfortunate Minister, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, has made this *surprising* comment: "A satellite with instructions for use that read 'Shake before using' is new to me."

A little black humour can do no harm, particularly as the Minister had already said that he was not responsible for the technical aspects of the disaster in space. He is responsible for everything else.

When, after a number of failures to lift off, the European launcher rocket Ariane took off on 18 November last year it had on board a museum piece.

TV-Sat, developed for and paid for by the Bundespost, is regarded by many experts to be redundant now. It can only accommodate four channels. Its Luxembourg competitor "Astra" can handle 16.

Direct beaming demands a lot of energy and the system is usually exhausted after ten years of use.

New communications satellites developed by the Americans are not only cheaper but have a longer life-expectancy.

But that is not the only mistake the Minister is answerable for. For ages people in the Federal Republic have been told that they could receive four additional programmes via satellite — Eins plus, 3SAT, RTL plus and SAT 1 — if they paid only DM2,000 for a dish antenna installed on their present TV aerial.

The Posts deliberately avoided giving any kind of a warning that they would allow the old-fashioned transmitter in space to beam sophisticated signals.

Instead of the usual German Pal (phase alternation line) colour TV standard the new D2-Mac that would solve the problem of incompatibility with the Secam system used in France, the GDR and Eastern Europe.

It was so new that no-one could receive the signals who was not prepared to buy a new television set or at least an additional piece of equipment.

The great disadvantage for this novelty from the Posts was that industry could not deliver the necessary equipment.

In the television industry the Schwarz-Schilling programme was cynically, but aptly named "television for the blind from space" well before the solar panel refused to do the job it was designed for.

The attempt to shake the satellite into operation has failed. Even if the technicians have little hope of success, no stone will remain unturned to try and bring the satellite into operation.

If all fails the politicians will talk their way out with mention of the temperamental nature of satellites so as to cover up their own sloppiness and errors.

They cannot deny that they were not warned. In 1985, equipment and antenna suppliers welcomed the decision that it was intended to equip the TV-Sat with D2-Mac, but there were protests from the programme stations.

Their arguments were enlightening. All had to sign up many viewers very quickly to achieve revenue that was necessary for the high rental costs for transmission time. How do you do that when no-one can view anything?

The Posts Minister personally played the biggest trick against TV-Sat, however. Perhaps because as a specialist he saw bankruptcy in space drawing near.

To the surprise of many citizens he discovered free frequencies in the allegedly crowded air waves over the Federal Republic.

This meant in fact that people in heavily-populated regions of the Federal Republic sooner or later could receive two extra commercial channels (in many locations this is already happening).

This would be easy and cheap for everyone. TV pictures could be picked up from transmitters on mountains or tower tops close to the existing aerial.

It seemed as if TV-Sat was refusing to do its job out of malice. It is totally superfluous, because viewers can manage without it.

TV fanatics will have cable links installed, the remainder are quite happy with two commercial stations via antenna.

If the Bonn Cabinet plans to consider whether to continue with TV-Sat 2 or whether the taxpayers' millions wasted in space should be written off then it should for once have the courage to scrap plans for the second satellite before it too is airborne and a flop.

Reinhard Urschel
(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 24 February 1988)

■ EDUCATION

Hanover schools are strong on educational exchange



They plant trees in Nicaragua, introduce their educational system to Polish students and get to know how Turkish schoolkids come to terms with Islam at school.

More and more schoolboys and girls are getting to know boys and girls of the same age all over the world through direct contact.

No secondary school that cares for its reputation can afford to disregard contacts of this kind with the East Bloc as well as overseas.

Recently there have been considerable efforts to increase intra-German contacts. Hardly had the twinning agreement between Hanover and Leipzig been signed than five gymnasiums and a comprehensive school expressed considerable interest in exchange programmes.

Specific schools in the plan have not (yet) been named. The schoolboys and girls have a completely free hand in their choice of partner school.

For instance the Tellkampf School has a link with a school in Nicaragua and the Ratsgymnasium has contacts with a high school in Kaliningrad (Königsberg).

The Bismarck School in Hanover is the most active in partnership programmes. The school calls itself the "Unesco school on the Maschsee (Hanover's city-centre lake)."

There are only 20 schools of this type in the Federal Republic. One important aspect of education in the school is international cooperation and communication between peoples. The school puts great emphasis on international themes and problems.

Five years ago the Bismarck School was the first in the Federal Republic to establish a partnership with its fifth opposite number, the Mariae Koszutskiev Lycée in Poznan (Posen), Poland.

In 1979 headmaster Ulrich Bauermeister went to Poznan to get things going. At first the partnership agreement between the two cities was cold-shouldered, but when martial law was lifted his efforts met with success.

In the spring of 1983 the first Bismarck schoolboys and girls travelled to Poznan and schoolboys and girls from Poznan made a return visit to Hanover in 1986.

This resulted in two German-Polish marriages between former Bismarck School pupils and young girls from Poznan and any number of private contacts and pen-friendships.

The German schoolboys and girls are not accommodated with Polish families nor are the Poles put up by German families when they are in the Federal Republic, but overnight in guest houses and pensions.



Bismarckschule students from Hanover camping in Poland with exchange students from Poznan (Photo: Stefan Mühler)

Bauermeister said: "We do this in consideration of the limited accommodation available in Polish homes, and we did not want to have just the children of functionaries in these trips."

The Goethe School in Hanover has been teaching Russian for the past 25 years and is currently trying to arrange a partnership with a school in Minsk.

Bauermeister's colleague in the Goethe school, Horst Homburg, thinks differently. He puts great stress on staying with a family and direct contacts. "Otherwise the exchange is a waste of time," he said.

He quoted the example of Saarbrücken where the first partnership agreement with a Russian school has been arranged, and lays great store by persistence and stubborn probing at the door of Lower Saxony's deputy Prime Minister, whom Homburg has recently met.

Homburg is optimistic. He said: "Perhaps in two years' time the first schoolboys and girls from the Russian class will travel to Russia, then later the choir and orchestra will follow them."

Schoolboys and girls from the Bismarck School have little contact with the Turks who live in Linden, a district to the west of Hanover, but shortly they will entertain boys and girls from the Istanbul Lycée.

Bound for Istanbul

Fourteen young people from the Südstadt Gymnasium took a close look for the first time in 1985 at a school partnership with the school in Istanbul, which is a senior school where mathematics and the natural sciences are taught in German.

A small group of experienced people went there. Reports about the Hanover school system with its liberal teaching style caused astonishment, for "criticism in Turkish educational establishments is not welcomed and a committee representing the schoolboys and and girls is unheard of," according to the group from Hanover.

A dozen schoolboys and girls from the Bismarck School are going to Istanbul this autumn.

Gerhard Voigt, a teacher in the school, who will accompany the group, hopes to be able to include a few tourist side-trips such as visits to Ephesus, Ankara and other sights.

The Tellkampf School in Hanover was the first to put out feelers to the Third World and concluded a school partnership agreement with the Instituto Nacional Francisco Luis Espinoza in Esteli, Nicaragua.

The contact was made via a former pupil from the school, who heard of the Nicaraguan school's interest in an exchange programme and who immediately thought of his old school.

Before exchange visits were arranged the Tellkampf School showed its support for the Nicaraguan institute by sending it tools, books and educational material.

The school partnership agreements have their critics. At the *beginning the* schoolboys and girls heard criticisms along the lines that they would be indoctrinated with Communism or even turned to be anti-American.

Teacher Thomas Erler, who is involved in the school's exchange project, took a middle way. He said that his pupils would not fall victim to "revolutionary optimism" nor condemn the country as "a pacemaker for Communism."

The Tellkampf School is already doing something on the spot to improve living conditions in Nicaragua.

Not far from Esteli boys and girls from the school have planted more than 1,500 neem trees from which local farmers in two or three years' time will be able to produce natural insecticides.

The initiator of the exchange programme, Klaus Windolph, was transferred to another school just before the first group from Nicaragua arrived, but this has had no effect on the exchange programme, which is being implemented as enthusiastically as ever.

In the summer holidays another dozen or so pupils from the school will visit Nicaragua.

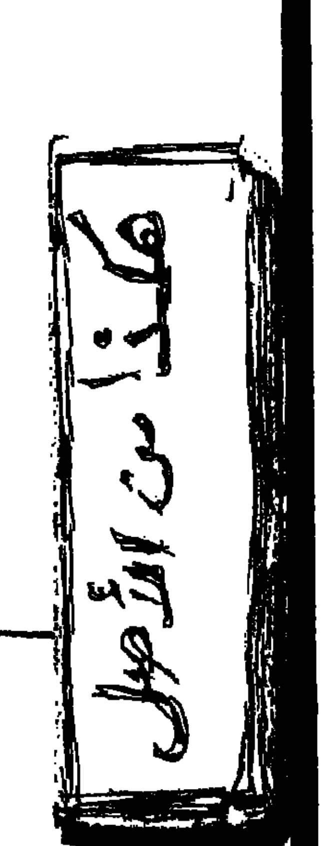
Georg Willmer, head of the comprehensive school at Mühlenberg, a south-west district of Hanover, has high hopes of the educational value of a school partnership agreement project with a school in Zimbabwe. He believes that schoolboys and girls can learn more about the country than they could from textbooks and TV.

Representatives from the Zimbabwe school have already visited the Hanover school to discuss details.

Willmer is not too concerned that trips to Africa will only be possible for and within the means of, pupils in the upper classes of the school.

He said that pen-friendships could be started up in the sixth and seventh

Continued on page 11



■ LITERATURE

Traven — bestseller writer cloaked in mystery



Who would not like to solve the Ben Traven mystery that has puzzled the literary world for years?

He has been the subject of detective work by many — by Czech journalist Egon Erwin Kisch, by *Stern* magazine reporter Gerd Heidemann (before he discovered the Hitler Diaries forger Kujau) and by a BBC team.

They all sought to find out who the best-selling writer, known in Germany as just B. Traven, really was.

For years his work has been the subject of adventurous speculation. Any number of readers have pored over his stories looking for a clue by which to solve the secret of his identity.

Arthur Rimbaud (who vanished into Abyssinia) and the American Ambrose Bierce (who vanished in Mexico) were well-known writers when they disappeared into anonymity.

Traven, it seems, decided from the very beginning to be a writer cloaked in mystery.

For many years his life and works of have been a happy hunting ground for literary detectives. Rolf Recknagel, an East German university lecturer, is rightly regarded as one of the leading authorities on Ben Traven.

In the Federal Republic a Ben Traven reader has been published as a paperback by Rowohlt, much recommended by left-wing teachers.

This is quite understandable for two favourite themes of the intellectual orientation of the post-1968 generation are combined in Traven's oeuvre.

The author of the John Houston/Humphrey Bogart film *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* was, before the First World War, a left-wing publicist and magazine publisher, *(Der Ziegelbrenner)*, under the name of Ret Marut.

In the barbaric madness that erupted at the end of the Bavarian Soviet Republic he narrowly escaped being shot.

The other was Traven the revolutionary author of "Rebellion der Gehenkten" or "Regierung," who established the theme of the Third World as a theme for left-wing literature from a Central and South American standpoint.

From the beginning of the 1920s Traven, then living in Mexico, achieved world fame as a writer. It is no accident that from 1926 onwards all his books appeared under the imprint of the trade union-owned "Büchergilde Gutenberg."

This publishing house, a book club, continues to bring out his books, including a handsome complete edition.

The book on Ben Traven by the Harvard Germanist Karl S. Guthke has also appeared under the Frankfurt-based "Büchergilde" imprint.

It is 800 pages long and is subtitled "Biography of a Puzzle." It will make a handsome addition to anyone's library.

The book includes many illustrations and is beautifully printed with text and quotations printed in different colours, easy to read.

Publication had to be delayed more than six months to end up with such a fine volume.

It is a commendably detailed work of biography, and it really is a Traven biography.

Not everything that a detective would seek is in this book, nor does it include everything that an all-knowing author would know.

Yet a reader interested in literature and a dreamer gripped by the Traven myth would come to the end of it and say: "I now know most of what is worth knowing."

What remains unexplained will always worry anyone who thinks in terms of police files. But that has nothing to do with the literary mystery surrounding Ben Traven.

In order to get some idea of the dual nature of the man who is portrayed by Guthke, you only have to emphasise one fact that is very impressively documented in this biography.

On the one side the unidentified author of "Das Totenschiff" is an embodiment of the human being who regards being officially registered in any way as the most serious inroad into his personal freedom.

Papers (in the plural) are not just a scrap of paper. They can tyrannise the holder — just as successful tyrants patiently smother freedom. To have no papers is, in the world as it is, a monumental misfortune.

In *Das Totenschiff* his hero, a seaman who gets left behind in port without papers, discovers this brutally. In Traven's novel his fate is that of a major topic in 20th century literature.

The man who was Ben Traven was regarded as an anarchist from his Munich days, an image he nurtured. He conveyed the impression that he might have shared his hero's fate not just out of hardship but with the proud awareness that it was demanded of him by his calling as a writer.

Despite the secrecy surrounding his identity the man who was Ben Traven seems to have preserved every little piece of paper relating to his life to an extent that might be regarded as a private cult.

When he fled from Munich and turned up in Mexico via many tangled paths he carried his own personal archives with him. They were extensive and threw light on Ret Marut's writing and publishing life in Munich. But not only that.

Guthke draws attention in his book to a theatre programme from the "Faller'sche Schauspieler-Gesellschaft" from 1840. Traven sent this to the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. in 1935 with an accompanying letter that made hints and deflected attention at one and the same time.

He pointed out at the beginning that in five years' time the programme would be 100 years old and that it was the only one in existence.

Then he expanded on the location, Warmbrunn, where, according to the theatre programme, Albert Lortzing's *The Czar and the Carpenter* was performed on 8 August 1840.

Traven pointed out that at that time a Prussian prince was there — Emperor Wilhelm I often took the waters there — and that members of the Prussian nobility performed with the theatre company.

In 1935 Traven was already famous, although the public did not know who he was. In his letter he drew attention to the fact that all the ladies in the company were designated as madame or demoiselle except one, "Frau von Sternwaldt."

Guthke followed up this name. He looked through registers of actors and actresses and while looking into a theatrical family came upon one Emilie von Sternwaldt.

In the last entry about her it said that in 1907 she was the prompter in the Pabst Theatre in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and in the Powers Theatre in Chicago in 1914.

She could have been the mother of the actor (1914) and man of literature (in Munich after 1914) and famous writer (after 1926) Ret Marut or Ben Traven.

Her personal particulars ring true to the tangle of statements made by Traven about his birth in America and about his childhood there, although Traven's English was affected by the time he spent in Germany.

This also clears up a question of Scandinavian descent.

The name Ludwig von Sternwaldt appears at the beginning of the family tree. He was born in 1804. One reference book puts in brackets the name (v. Warnstädt".

This leads to a family in Schleswig-Holstein which had a Danish-Swedish branch.

There were two brothers in the von Warnstedt family, born in 1819 and 1825, who emigrated to America and disappeared.

Their uncle and aunt, Jürgen and Charlotte von Warnstedt, lived in a place near Bad Segeberg that is named "Traventhal".

In the 14th century a noble family that died out lived in this district. The name still exists in a place name — Marutendorf, 11 kilometres to the west of Kiel. The family name was Maruthe or Marute.

The origins of the author of "Das Totenschiff" can be traced via the possible identity of his mother.

His father remains unknown and Guthke believes that Traven himself did not know who was his father. Traven, a sensitive man, gave much time to this.

Marut/Traven went to sea in his youth as a galley boy, cabin boy or deck-hand. He wrote about this in his stories.



Mystery man Traven
(Photo: Büchergilde Gutenberg)

Before 1914 he was so affluent that he was able to go into acting and in Düsseldorf pay more attention to the quality of the theatrical production than to his fee.

The period of the magazine "Der Ziegelbrenner" in Munich was certainly costly — one can compare it with what *Die Fackel* cost Karl Kraus.

Here was a man who could be a writer and who had enough money to concentrate on that.

If a few newspapers printed his stories (the Frankfurter Zeitung printed *Der verhängnisvolle Mülleimer*) he could not live from that. He had to finance his writing and was in a position to do so. Where did the money come from?

Guthke does not answer this question. His biography does not tackle with determination either the question of why Traven avoided Germany for years on end as if he were a criminal who feared being found out.

It is certain that Traven had to battle with phobias helped by the mystification with which he surrounded his person. He also was good at advertising. He knew how to employ poetic seclusion when this was required.

B. Traven – Biographie eines Rätsels by Karl S. Guthke. Published by Büchergilde Gutenberg, Frankfurt. 840 pages. DM54.

But there need not be a political story behind the puzzle of his identity.

On his way from Munich to Mexico he stopped off at Cologne. F.W. Seiwert's coloured tempera picture of Ret Marut originated from here.

It was found among Traven's possessions in Mexico City. There was already talk that he had kept private archives while still a refugee.

He had nothing to do with the large number of Germans who arrived in Mexico after Hitler took over power. He did not regard them as his comrades.

Guthke summarises this chapter in Traven's life by saying: "A man who was on the run all his life fled from the refugees."

It could be said that Ben Traven had nothing to do with Germany. That could be one interpretation of his life.

In Munich Ret Marut wanted to be a German poet, but this ambition came to nothing and polarised his frustration.

Ben Traven found a political theme in Mexico and became a writer read by the world.

Jürgen Busche
(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 19 February 1988)

Continued from page 10

classes. Contacts are maintained in English.

The most popular pupil exchange country is, as ever, America. Exchange programmes with schools in America are filled up in no time at all, be it with a Quaker school in New Town, near Philadelphia, that has a school partnership agreement with the Kaiser Wilhelm Gymnasium in Hanover, or a high school in Livonia, Michigan, that is linked to the Bismarck School.

Usually German schoolboys and girls who go on an exchange programme stay a whole year with an American family: the year before they have to decide on what educational stream they want to join.

Between four and 12 schoolboys and girls from Hanover's high schools make use of this opportunity to get to know "the American way of life" every year.

Dr Uwe Rademacher of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gymnasium, said that this was "a marvellous advantage for the young people concerned, not only from a language point of view but for their personal development."

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 16 February 1988)

■ ENVIRONMENT

Farmer Meier — a man with a mission

Allgemeine Zeitung
MAINZ

A wayside shrine to St Francis at the edge of a pine wood proclaims "blasphemy" in letters sprayed on its wall by a graffiti artist.

A king-size wooden cross stands alongside the shrine, while banners in the wood proclaim "Oh Lord forgive them, for they know not what they do" and "We want to share in shaping the future, not just to suffer it."

This strange backdrop for the picturesque shrine includes a small oak tree planted as a "token of our determination not to leave our homeland unprotected."

On ordinary weekdays only a few pedestrians and curious visitors visit the shrine, between Wackersdorf and Altenschwand, Bavaria, a mere 500 metres from the fence behind which the controversial nuclear fuel reprocessisng plant is under construction.

But on Sundays at 2 p.m. it is another matter, with up to 5,000 "pilgrims" attending a rally and an oecumenical outdoor service on the adjoining field.

The field belongs to an Altenschwand farmer, Michael Meier, 54, a legendary symbol of non-violent resistance to the Wackersdorf project.

Farmer Meier has for weeks been the centre of attention, beleaguered by scores of TV teams, radio reporters, Press photographers and journalists.

A diffident, retiring man, he occasionally doesn't understand the question and answers, visibly embarrassed: "I don't know what to say."

His views have been in demand since the end of January when the Bavarian administrative court in Munich upheld his appeal against the nuclear plant and declared the latest stage of planning permission null and void.

Michel, as his friends call him, is increasingly unhappy about this spate of media popularity. He arranges to meet journalists, then doesn't turn up, playing instead a truly Bavarian game of hide and seek.

Persistent queries and a time-consuming search finally reveal his whereabouts. He is out drinking in nearby Neuenschwand.

It is Mardi Gras, or Pancake Tuesday, and he is in a bar with 10-12 friends, neighbours and acquaintances. It is a regular Tuesday session.

Now he has finally been run to earth his friends say it is high time he hired a manager to capitalise on his growing popularity.

But the offer of a round of drinks if they will part with his company for a while works wonders. Solidarity begins to fray at the edges. Reluctantly he leaves, promising to be back within the hour.

We drive toward the construction site and are stopped by the police a few hundred yards before our destination. Federal Border Patrol officers check our identity cards.

When we finally arrive at the shrine Meier, who has not had much to say for himself so far, lets off steam, saying it is a police state when you are so humiliated before being allowed to set foot on your own land.

This sudden emotional outbreak is typical of a man who would soonest have nothing whatever to do with politics. He soon calms down as he proudly surveys his 17 acres of fields and woodland, land on which he grows potatoes, maize and barley in summer.

His mind wanders and he remembers the days when life ran a normal course, such as his 27 long yet satisfying years as a Wackersdorf brown coal miner.

A framed document on the wall of his no-frills kitchen testifies to long years of loyal service to the open-cast coal mine.

Miner Meier was a busy part-time farmer. After work he had his land and his six cows, ten pigs and the chicken run.

Holidays were out of the question. The TV set gathered dust. But the family — Meier, his wife and the four children Anton, Anita, Michael and Barbara — were happy.

Then, in 1981, unpleasant changes began. The mine closed down. Then the nuclear power reprocessing plant was mooted. Views differed, local opinion was divided.

Rallies were held, with anti-nuclear campaigners coming from all over Germany. Protesters set up a makeshift village of wooden huts on the proposed site. The police cleared it, with full Press coverage.

Land was purchased. Politicians promised jobs. The site was fenced off. Construction vehicles moved in. Planning permission was applied for.



Michael Meier, the lone farmer who has taken on the nuclear lobby, by the site of the proposed fuel processing plant in Wackersdorf. (Photo: Sven Simon)

Meier was strongly opposed to the idea. The risk of a radioactive leak, a nuclear mishap, was too great. He was determined to fight the project, not for his own sake but for his children's.

On 25 September 1985 he and three other local residents made an urgent appeal to the Bavarian administrative court against planning permission.

The appeal proceedings did not look too promising initially, while the company that planned to build the nuclear plant bought up surrounding land, arguing that this was preferable to being sued for damages in the event of an accident.

The other three appellants withdrew. One, a farmer, sold his land for DM1.6m. The other two, a restaurateur and the owner of a camping site, were worried that business would be hit by the constant police checks.

Farmer Meier was suddenly on his own. Yet behind the scenes he was backed by his lawyer, Herr Baumann, and the anti-nuclear campaigners in Schwandorf, the nearby market town, who claim so far to have spent DM250,000 on legal proceedings.

Meier has no intention of quitting. "There isn't enough money to buy me off," he says. Yet he could certainly use a windfall.

When the first court cases against Wackersdorf began his wife died. "I wouldn't wish that on anyone," he recalls, tears in his eyes.

He was at his wits' end, hardly knowing how to look after the farm, the home and the children on his own.

His eldest children, 23 and 25, now live on their own in nearby villages. But the youngest, 13 and 19, are still at home and cost every penny he can earn. Only a single calf, a goat and a sheep are left in the stables.

In the yard Bello, a four-year-old mongrel, a cross between a dachshund and a wolfhound, barks boredly at the chickens.

It is life as usual at Bahnhofstrasse 27 in Altenschwand, not a village that often has visitors, and when a TV team shot a short film about Meier and his farm it came in for criticism.

The village and the farm were ramshackle and unkempt. Farmer Meier ought to be ashamed of himself, a disgusted woman viewer from Upper Bavaria complained.

He just smiles wanly and points proudly to a file full of greetings cards and congratulations, over 100 letters and postcards from all over Germany.

He was bombarded with fan mail after winning his court case in Munich. People he had never seen or heard of in his life praised his staying power and civic courage. A Berlin family saw the court ruling as the "first step toward a happy and radiation-free future in the countryside."

In response to this euphoric acclaim Meier reassures his numerous admirers: "I mean what I say, and what I have started I continue until it is finished."

He has taken his appeal one stage further and applied for previous planning permission to be declared null and void. His aim is to bring construction work to a total halt. In Altenschwand, popula-

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■ HEALTH

Heidelberg cancer information centre for reliable, reassuring advice



A cancer information service founded in 1986 in Heidelberg is up to its eyes in work. People confused by the bewildering variety of cancer therapies and doctors' explanations are turning to it for clarity.

Professional jargon is difficult to understand. And many doctors are reluctant to repeat explanations in a more communicative way because time is money.

The centre gave a typical example of how easily people are frightened. Recently a doctor told a woman he would have to remove a small growth from her breast for examination purposes. He also mentioned something about making hundreds of cuts.

This so frightened the woman she rang the advice centre. The centre told her she had misunderstood the doctor. The cuts referred to work on the growth and not, as feared, to operations on her breast.

Psychosomaticist Almuth Sellschopp and press and public relations officer Hilke Stamatiadis-Smidt founded the service and modelled it on American lines.

The Federal Ministry of Health subsidises it. They wanted to educate people about cancer without causing the medical profession to see them as a threat.

The service answers many banal questions. Many people believe cancer is contagious. They ask whether it's possible to catch cancer from lung cancer patients who cough. Or whether children can catch leukaemia by sleeping in a sufferer's bed.

Medical psychologist Rolf Verres has written a book on cancer. In his book *Cancer and Fear* he says every fifth person is afraid that cancer is contagious.

The centre has dealt with about 15,000 calls. Not all of them were due to fear or misunderstandings. One caller asked whether cancer caused her son's crossed eyes. Others asked whether young children's hair grows back after chemotherapy. Some wanted to know about special diets and operations.

Confused sufferers who have tried several doctors look to the centre for independent expert advice. Two thirds of the 600 to 1,600 monthly calls want information about treatment.

The advisers see themselves more as part-time laymen than as cancer specialists. They are not oncologists (tumour specialists). They are nurses, doctors, psychologists and chemists who work Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. for ten marks an hour.

They do not diagnose, recommend doctors or give prognoses on life expectancy. They advise using generally available information on treatments and medicines and on clinics, self-help groups, cancer symptoms and side-effects.

Personnel are trained on three-week courses. They learn to answer medical questions and recognise hidden psychosocial problems behind them.

A patient who wants Dr Hackethal's address — he recommends euthanasia for hopeless cases — might only want to talk about the aftermath of a major operation.

A caller asking whether cancer is hereditary might be trying to blame a family member for passing on the disease.

Special medical questions are dealt with by a team of six headed by Dr Karin Dietrich. Owners of and visitors to solariums often ask whether all ultra-violet rays cause cancer.

Gabriele Kautzmann found the answer a computer linked to a databank and by asking at Heidelberg University's skin clinic.

She found out there are two kinds of ultra violet light, UV-A and UV-B, which mix naturally in the earth's atmosphere. The B rays can cause cancer. Therefore it's wise to avoid excessive sun-bathing.

But skin specialists are not too keen on UV-A rays either. They are not dangerous but they age the skin. If medicines are taken while sun-bathing it could increase the risk.

Since 1986 the information centre has had 2,000 inquiries about carcinogens. And just as many again about unproven treatments beyond the conventional domains of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

The Heidelberg centre has come across serious homoeopathic and anthroposophical practitioners of alternative medicine who send patients quickly to doctors if they make no progress. But they have also come across a lot of quacks.

If alternative medicine is expensive, it's usually a good sign of foul play. They have found many dubious medicines advertised in glossy magazines. Their computer and talks with specialists have shown them to be dangerous.

Many doctors like the centre and the way it enlightens the public about quacks. But it's a delicate topic for many others.

Professor Dieter Hossfeld, head of the oncological department at Hamburg University Hospital, said the centre might show preference to clinics which are in or close to Heidelberg.

Sellschopp and Stamatiadis-Smidt reject this. They say they are not in competition with doctors. On the contrary they only want to help the profession by filling gaps in its service.

They say cancer patients during treatment are in a physical and psychological state of emergency. Chemotherapy, radiation and deforming operations leave them in a state of shock — about 60 per cent of the centre's inquiries are from such patients.

After treatment they start asking questions about their condition. But since appointments after treatment are difficult to get, often because they pay less than treatment, it's difficult to discuss them with anyone.

Sellschopp says the centre fills a gap even if the patient does get an appointment. She says the patients tend to be passive with the doctor. When they ring the centre they have the benefit of actively seeking information rather than passively consuming it.

The German Cancer Society has said it recognises the need for better information services. The society, which is reliant on donations, intends to finance information services as well as cancer research and literature and the needy.

At present the information centre is negotiating with people and organisations for money. The German Health Ministry stops its subsidy next year.

Originally people were sceptical about the centre. Even the late Mildred Scheel, the ex-President's wife who headed the Cancer Research Society and who died of cancer, felt that an advice centre was unnecessary.

But Hilke Stamatiadis says the Federal government and the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg were interested right at the beginning. Even the German Cancer Society, which is the society for German oncologists, are interested in taking over the costs.

So it looks as if the Heidelberg centre will pass its probation and join Bonn as the only other German cancer information centre. There is enough demand available. The Americans have more than twenty of them. The American Cancer Institute checks the quality of the centres' information.

The two German centres differ from each other. Bonn's centre has better social service facilities but cannot provide specialist answers as quickly as Heidelberg.

Heidelberg's centre is trying to build up a European information network, negotiating with similar organisations in France, Great Britain, Holland and Belgium.

The German centres will have to make changes if they want to improve communication between themselves. Otherwise we might have a situation where international communication is better than the domestic kind.

The Bonn and Heidelberg centres would be able to cut their work in half and reassure people who get different information if they shared data via computer.

First the centres will have to have a common training programme for their staff and use a standard computer system. But the centres have not discussed these changes for a long time.

Uwe Sander

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 12 February 1988)

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tion 450, all heads are turned when Farmer Meier turns up. His neighbours clap his shoulders in congratulation.

But he only really feels at ease among his friends at his "local." No-one in the bar bothers him with high-falutin' questions or expects brilliant answers.

A half-litre of Bavarian beer and a plate of liver dumplings with sauerkraut are enough to reassure a man that the world is still in order.

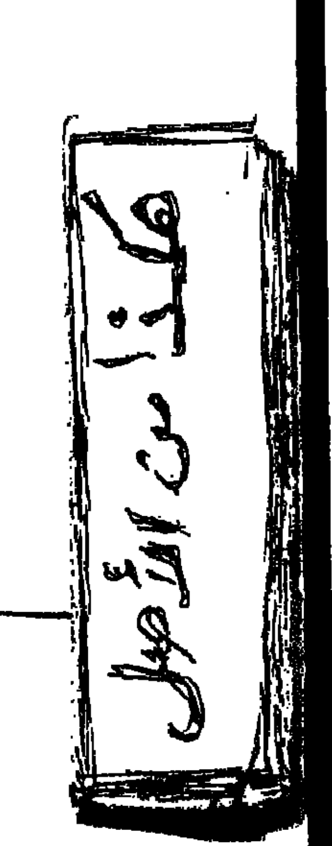
When the brass band strikes up the music Farmer Meier, the gentle rebel, at times feels like dancing. "I do love dancing," he says.

On the day of our interview there was merely an ear-splitting disco for the village kids in the cellar. He slipped downstairs for a quick look and the disc jockey promptly interrupted the music for a few words of welcome: "Here's our TV star, folks. Autographs afterwards, please."

The kids look round for a moment, then return to the latest pop music...

Dieter Oberhollenzer

(Allgemeine Zeitung, Mainz, 25 February 1988)



■ MODERN LIVING

Soccer aggro: how to keep crowds under control

The Bonn Interior Ministry ordered an investigation into soccer violence two years ago, but the results have not been published. The suspicion is that the report is too critical of the police. Claudia Meyer has spoken to a number of experts about the report and about soccer violence in the Federal Republic.

Hanover sociologist Gunter A. Pilz feels that fundamentally he has been misunderstood. "I have not declared war on the police," he says.

His telephone has not stopped ringing since it was known that the report on soccer crowd violence he and four other scientists conducted would not be published because there was so much criticism of the police in it.

The Interior Ministry has also intervened and since then he has been more restrained in his public statements.

But he stands by his basic attitude. He said that using police "could not prevent soccer violence, but just shift it and cause it to escalate."

Philip Housley, chairman of the 10,000-member Ipswich Town fan club in England, believes the same thing. He has warned the Football Association not to put all its trust in the police to control trouble-makers when England plays abroad.

He is particularly gloomy about England playing in the European Championships, which are being held in the Federal Republic this summer.

He said: "Rioting among fans is unavoidable."

The Federal Republic is hosting the European Championships and officials are already terrified of 15 June, when England plays Holland in Düsseldorf. The fans from both teams are among the toughest in Europe.

Flashback: it was English fans who caused the worst catastrophe so far in soccer when they rioted on 29 May 1985 in the Heysel Stadium in Brussels during the European Cup final between Liverpool and Juventus Turin. The rioting cost 39 lives and 350 injured.

Has the shock of the Brussels catastrophe had any effect on violent football fans? The British hooligans have their imitators in the Federal Republic.

They report on their "acts of heroism" — anonymously of course — in their "Hooligan Reports," a quite special type of fan magazine.

These deal in detail with soccer clashes during Saturday matches, including appropriate newspaper clippings. Stanley Kubrick's film *The Clockwork Orange* seems to have been godfather to these publications.

One of them includes a report on the return to Hamburg from a match in Munich: "On the way we stopped at any number of motorway service stations. Someone said that the stock of beer was running out. Shouldn't we help ourselves at a filling station, which did not please the station attendant.

"Quite accidentally he fell against the shelves. To show our thanks for his kind service he got a couple of extra kicks. Then we got away from the scene as fast as possible.

"Still the cops overtook us and the filling station attendant identified six innocent people, who were arrested. Oh, by the way, one of our mates throttled the bus-driver travelling at 100 kilometres an hour."

Ordinary citizens are aghast when they see soccer fans bawling, shouting and usually affected by drink, invading railway stations and pedestrian precincts. They are filled with anxiety and it prevents them from soberly looking at the causes of increasing football violence.

In an investigation for Bielefeld University educationalist Wilhelm Heitmeyer came to the conclusion that soccer fans magnified social problems, "a society in which there was no longer a call for social integration, but a society in which the individual thinks only of his own personal success."

Fans themselves say that they are seeking a common identity. One put it this way: "In the past fans identified with a club, but now because of the circumstances prevailing they identify with the nation."

This explains why neo-Nazis in some cases have tried to infiltrate soccer fan groups looking for new recruits.

Expressions of anti-semitism or xenophobia are not sufficient to stamp the terraces as areas of brutality for right-wing extremists.

Heitmeyer said: "Baden-Württemberg Education Minister Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder recommends the singing of the national anthem in schools and calls that patriotism. Others call it nationalism when the fans do the same thing."

Klaus Broder, a Berlin psychologist, sees no reason for concern. Soccer fans are a normal manifestation of youth culture.

Narciss Göbbel calls this youth culture "good and worth supporting." He formed the first soccer fan project in the Federal Republic in 1980 after the tragic death of Werder Bremen fan Andrian Maleika.

He said: "Football expands social expectations. It has a liberating effect."

Despite the realisation that football enthusiasts are made up of all kinds of different types, since Brussels soccer fans have gone out of their way to express themselves in terms of violence.

Dieter Bott, a left-wing social worker in the Frankfurt fan project, suggests that attention should be directed away from fans and towards institutions, particularly the police.

He said: "The conservative camp must once more talk to its kids instead of sending them to the police."

Crowd violence spills on to the pitch at Dortmund (Photo: dpa)

Most experts would fundamentally go along with this view. Pilz warns against countering riots by an ever-increasing police presence.

Fans' self-regulatory efforts are knocked sideways by stringent police precautions in the stadia.

The consequences are available to be read in police reports. Man to man fights get more brutal and there is an increase in the use of weapons that can be used at a distance such as flares, gas pistols and stones.

Dieter Bott said that the police had taken over running the show. Police officers who have to serve on the football front week after week naturally see things differently.

The head of police operations for the two European Championship games to be played at Cologne's Müngersdorf Stadium, Winrich Granitzka, regards the idea of self-regulation among fans as utter madness.

He said: "There is no longer any sense of restraint. Trouble-makers continue to hit and kick a person even when he is down."

Granitzka is convinced that police officers are more and more having to play a role imposed on them in this modern version of "cowboys and Indians."

If they do not play this role properly, as in Brussels when police officials did not intervene in good time, catastrophe is indeed unavoidable.

It is true that he and his colleagues feel often enough that they are let down by others involved in soccer. Not so long ago the Cologne police accused the Cologne Football Club of not doing enough about the club's trouble-makers.

A police official said: "The club's involvement went no further than to make loudspeaker announcements when fireworks were let off." Since Brussels, however, alcohol has been forbidden at the Cologne club's Müngersdorf Stadium.

The hard core of Cologne's trouble-makers is made up of from 50 to 60 men. Werner Schmidt, for many years head of police operations at the stadium, said: "This group should be isolated."

But Pilz calls for caution in applying such a strategy. He said: "Police tactics of isolating fans who have been identified as trouble-makers pushes these young people to the brink. It makes them enemies of society, which they certainly are not."

He continued: "This is just as much a problem as trying to draw a firm line between violent and peaceable fans."

He is doubtful of the effectiveness of preventive programmes drawn up by the CID. This involves appealing to fans to avoid places where trouble-makers congregate.

Pilz says this is yet another course of action that criminalises soccer fans, "in which the media and sports associations play their part when they divide fans up into the good and the bad."

Do soccer fan projects offer an alternative? There is no all-embracing answer because the situations in the individual stadia of the national soccer league teams are so various.

The situation is made more complicated if, as in Cologne, the club has engaged an organisation to promote the fans' links with the club.

Ollie, 23, is the eloquent chairman of the "United Germany" fan club, in no way a tough club.

He doesn't want to know about the company engaged to promote fan participation in the club's activities and he pooh-poohs offers to meet the team's professional players.

He asked what he would do if he met them? Ask them how much they earned a month? An experimental project in Bremen could be successful. Fans are working on a history of the Werder Bremen football club.

In Frankfurt Dieter Bott arranges press contacts for fans of Eintracht Frankfurt football club so that they can put the reporting record right when they are misrepresented unfairly.

When they are successful they get quite a kick from this experience.

Erwin Hahn, a psychologist at the Federal Sports Academy in Cologne, is surprised that "football fans have not become alibis for the routine and omnipresent violence in our society."

He said: "People who are filled with indignation about hooligans on the terraces are distracted from this violence."

Claudia Meyer

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 26 February 1988)

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federal flag is explicitly specified in law (in Article 22 of Basic Law).

The Federal coats of arms, the Federal eagle as an emblem, and the Federal seal are only covered in a directive issued by the Federal President on 20 January 1950.

Following an exchange of letters with Konrad Adenauer, Theodor Heuss declared on 2 May 1952 that the *Deutschlandlied* by Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (words) and Joseph Haydn (music) should become the national anthem:

"The third verse will be sung on state occasions" (the first begins with the words *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*).

During the trial against the singer the question was raised for the first time whether the directive by the Federal President is an adequate legal basis.

The court pulled out of the affair by dismissing the case because of the trifling nature of the offence.

Professor Hümmerich is convinced that a special legal provision is needed to protect the anthem.

Constitutional experts in the Bonn Interior Ministry, however, take a different view.

The *Deutschlandlied*, they say, was declared to be the national anthem in 1922 by Reich President Friedrich Ebert.

The Federal President also acted in accordance with his responsibility for national symbols.

Since in doing so he acted, as provided for in the Basic Law, in coordination with the Federal government the directive has a legally binding effect.

The experts, therefore, believe that the anthem, the coat of arms and the eagle are adequately safeguarded and that no new law is required.

Horst Zimmermann

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 26 February 1988)



Christa Kinshofer-Güthlein kissing slalom silver — Downhill gold for Marina Kiehl (with mascot)

■ WINTER OLYMPICS

Media come first, athletes poor second at 1988 Calgary 'Super-Games'

The International Olympic Committee sold out Olympic principles in Calgary in a hypocritical and cynical manner. The Calgary organisation committee and IOC president Juan Samaranch led us to believe we would see the greatest Winter Olympics of all time.

We now know better. The IOC gambled with Olympic principles and earned the contempt of athletes. The participants said the Games were unfair. Can one say anything worse about a sporting event?

Now the Games are over people are asking whose games they are anyway. The committee chooses the venue. Are they its property?

Television, which was dictatorial about scheduling, pays for the broadcasting rights. Are they its property?

Do they belong to the sponsors who use the Games to advertise their products? And what about the public and the athletes?

The athletes spend years training for the most important competition of their lives. Their performance is the fulcrum around which the Games turn. Without them there would be no Olympics. One only has to reflect on Olympic principles to see how disastrous Calgary was. Sport is supposed to be the counterpart of the achievement-orientated society. Society sees its image in sport and identifies with its triumphs and failures. One may call modern sport a great show. But it is still dependent on performance. Spectators and athletes have to be able to measure and compare performances. Otherwise the public and television would lose interest. The most important law for major sport is to provide athletes with the best facilities. Everything should be subordinated to them. The organisers broke this principle in Calgary.

The calendar of events was the first victim. Originally the Games were to run from 23 February to 6 March to coincide with favourable weather forecasts.

But ABC television was against it. They knew the Games would boost their audience ratings. So they had the games pulled forward to cooincide with the month in which negotiations with sponsors on advertising rates would take place.

Then the Olympic Committee gave in to local politics at the expense of the athletes. It allowed Calgary to build the ski jump and bobsled run in one of the most windswept corners of the city. Calgary wanted to make a recreation park more attractive to visitors.

We all saw the results. Bad weather continually interrupted the ski jump and bobsled events. When the weather improved, ABC insisted on waiting for peak viewing time. By peak viewing time the weather was often bad again.

As a result the poor athletes had no reliable timetable, were often relocated miles away to other jumps and runs or sat waiting in fear of cancellations.

Television cannot be blamed. After all it paid $309m for the broadcasting rights. And anyone who pays that much is entitled to a say in what goes on.

The IOC is supposed to look after the athletes' interests. But Samaranch too often gave televison priority.

The IOC sold things which one should not be allowed to sell and embroidered them with an Olympic ideal. Television has never paid more for broadcasting rights and never were the interests of athletes more disregarded.

The season of big money from North American television is once again over. The IOC expects only $300m for both the 1992 summer and winter games.

Public interest is waning. It will continue to do so if sport and athletes are betrayed and sold like they were in Calgary.

Views on the Olympics are subjective. Commercialisation of the Games is a reality to which one can and must grow accustomed. But the IOC has to ensure that commercialisation does not destroy the conditions under which athletes can have their performances fairly compared to others. The IOC is cynical when it talks to young people about a war on doping when it itself handles athletes like puppets and forgets every principle for cash considerations.

Axel Hacke

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 29 February 1988)

Nordic combination gold in a thrilling final for Hubert Schwarz, Thomas Schiller and Hans-Peter Pohl (Photos: Sven Simon, AP, dpa)

Best showing since 1976

Before the Olympic flame was extinguished in the McMahon Stadium, Calgary, the Soviet Union was again the No. 1 in winter sports, with a tally of 29 medals, including 11 golds.

But with eight medals, two of them gold, the Federal Republic of Germany had its most successful Winter Olympics since 1976 in Innsbruck.

Willi Daume, head of the National Olympic Committee, said: "We weren't as bad as expected." But we were not, he added, "so good that we can afford to forget the task German sport has ahead of it if it wants to get back to the top."

Walther Tröger, team manager, was more pleased with the results than Daume. "I'm very satisfied," he said. We had great performances and had no absolute failure. The combination events went great.

"We did very very well in the Alpine and sled events. The biathletes showed what they were capable of. The jumpers, despite weakness, got honourable results.

"The figure skaters did what they could. The cross-country skiers showed that the Olympics is not the right place to make your preparations. Speed skaters and the bob team were a little below form."

Tröger headed a team 93 strong. It was the largest since Grenoble in 1968. "The medal-winners were those who stayed in the Olympic Village and kept in contact with the team," he said.

Marina Kiehl won gold in the downhill event. Hans-Peter Pohl, Hubert Schwarz and Thomas Müller won the gold in the Nordic combination.

Christa Kinshofer-Güthlein, Frank Wörndl in the giant slalom, George Hackl in the bob and Ernst Reiter, Stefan Höck, Peter Angerer and Fritz Fischer in the biathlon won silver.

The sled duo Schwab and Staudinger and, again, Christa Kinshofer-Güthlein won bronze.

Daume's aim is to beat East Germany. Admittedly, it was less successful this time, having won more medals than the Soviet Union at Sarajevo.

But it did have the star of the Games in skater Katarina Witt, 22. She won her second gold in a row and equalled the feat of the legendary Norwegian Sonja Henie.

Matti Nykänen of Finland also made history. He now has three more golds to go with the one he won in Sarajevo. He intends to compete at Albertville in 1992.

The Swede Gunde Svan repeated his two gold medal victories of 1984 in the cross-country event. The East German Frank-Peter Roetsch became the first biathlete to win gold in the two individual races.

The Italian Alberto Tomba equalled Sweden's Ingemar Stenmark's feat of winning gold in both the slalom and the giant slalom.

The Dutch girl Yvonne van Gennip also belongs to the greats. She stole the gold from the East Germans in the speed skating event.

Vreni Schneider from Switzerland who won two gold and the Russian cross-country skier Tamara Tikhonowa also gave incredible performances.

Christa Kinshofer-Güthlein made a great effort. Eight years after winning silver in Lake Placid she won two more medals. No other woman ski racer has ever done that.

H. H. Mädler/dpa

(Mannheimer Morgen, 29 February 1988)